

# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



*An American Quarterly  
Devoted to Russia  
Past and Present*

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## THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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The purpose of *The Russian Review* is to interpret the real aims and aspirations of the Russian people, as distinguished from and opposed to Soviet Communism, and to advance general knowledge of Russian culture, history and civilization. The Review invites contributions by authors of divergent views, but the opinions expressed in any individual article of this journal are not necessarily those of the editors.

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# Reflections on Chekhov\*

BY MARC ALDANOV

THE present short essay is, of course, in no way intended as a biographical sketch. Biographies of Chekhov, in many languages, exist in profusion; the first one appeared in Russia some forty years ago. The literature of reminiscences of him is immense; so is the critical literature. His enormous talent as a creative artist has long been beyond dispute. This writer would, without hesitation, assign him fourth place in Russian prose (artificial and useless as such a tabulation of ranks in art may be): Pushkin and Lermontov, primarily great poets, however exquisite their prose writings, are not included in this count; among the prose writers proper, Chekhov, in my judgment, would come right after Tolstoy, Gogol, Dostoevsky, ahead even of Turgenev and Goncharov.

Both in the short story and the drama Chekhov has created his own peculiar form, his own rhythm, his own idiom. Much has been said about the influence of Maupassant on him; yet, if ever there was any, it has been greatly exaggerated. It has also been repeatedly said that in Chekhov's writings "nothing ever happens." Not so long ago, a similar view was expressed by Somerset Maugham, whose generally perceptive and valuable comments on Chekhov are still unknown to Russian readers. Russian critics have never made reference to them. The famous British author, himself a past master of the short story, quotes Chekhov's own words as evidence: "Why write about a man getting into a submarine and going to the North Pole to reconcile himself to the world, while his beloved throws herself with a hysterical shriek from a belfry? All this is untrue and does not happen in real life. One must write about simple things: how Piotr Semionovich married Maria Ivanovna. That is all." To this Somerset Maugham adds: "I have little doubt that Chekhov would have written stories with an ingenious, original and strong plot if he had been able to. It was not in his temperament. Like all good writers he made a merit of his limitations." Still one may ask whether there is much factual truth in the allegation itself. Is there really as little "plot" as that in Chekhov's stories and plays? Really so much less than in the works of many other writers who have never

\*Translated from the Russian by Ida Estrin [Ed.]

been the target of a similar criticism? If it comes to that, one play alone, "The Three Sisters," contains a disastrous fire and a duel culminating in murder. What more could one ask in the matter of "plot"? Few modern playwrights, in particular British, would dare to make use of incidents such as these, which, after all, do not occur every day in real life, though naturally more often than a voyage to the North Pole in a submarine.

Chekhov's fate as a writer was, in a way, unusual. He was the grandson of a serf, grew up in poverty, in a remote provincial town, in a family utterly devoid of education. His father was a coarse man who brought him up sternly and often thrashed him. As a writer he had to endure the preliminary censorship to which Russian literature was subject in his day (though he may have been less harassed by it than some other writers of his time and certainly less than his predecessors). All this might have foreshadowed a difficult, slow, and cheerless literary career. Moreover, literary criticism in old Russia was not too kind; as a rule, it was less benevolent, at any rate, than criticism in France or the United States. In this connection Somerset Maugham again quotes Chekhov (with some relish, it would seem): "Critics are like horse-flies which prevent the horse from ploughing. For over twenty years I have read criticisms of my stories, and I do not remember a single remark of any value or one word of valuable advice. Only once Skabichevsky wrote something which made an impression on me. He said I would die in a ditch, drunk." Chekhov's letters are usually facetious in tone, and this facetiousness, to tell the truth, is sometimes tiresome and not always as amusing as in the above passage. However, the words just quoted should be taken with a grain of salt: sometimes he did pay attention to criticism and now and then, to some extent, followed his critics' advice (which may be regretted in some instances). Be it as it may, despite all unfavorable omens, his literary career proved exceptional in its brilliance and the swift achievement of success. The most important periodicals of Moscow and Petersburg opened their doors wide to the young writer. He was not yet twenty-eight when his first play "Ivanov" was accepted and staged with outstanding success by the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petersburg, one of the two highest-ranking theatres in Russia. At about the same time he was awarded the Pushkin prize of literature by the Academy. Grigorovich, an old writer, of minor stature, saluted him with an enthusiastic letter. Some time later he was elected honorary member of the Imperial Academy. His literary earnings (he had no other in-

come) soon allowed him to live comfortably, to support his parents, to travel abroad, to undertake a long journey to Asia, to buy a country estate, and to spend nearly a year in Nice. Finally, the publisher, Marks, acquired the rights to his complete works and paid him the net sum of seventy-five thousand rubles (thirty-seven thousand dollars; yet considering the extremely low cost of living in Russia at that time, this would be the equivalent of some one hundred thousand present-day dollars, or even more). In continental Europe, if not in the United States, then, and now, writers are rarely found who could boast of a similarly successful career. What French author, for instance, could have, in his twenties, a play staged by the Comédie Française, or could sell his collected works on terms even remotely as advantageous as these?

Outside Russia, Chekhov was little known in his lifetime. I remember as a young boy, while traveling with my family abroad, I learned of Chekhov's death from a German newspaper: "At Badenweiler the Russian writer Anton Chekhov died of consumption. . . ." The notice was brief, five or six lines, and quite indifferent in tone. While he lived, little of what he wrote was being translated. In one of his letters he mentions, obviously as "an event," that one of his stories has been translated into the Danish language and adds jokingly: "Now I feel easy in my mind about Denmark." It is difficult to say just when his actual world fame began. In Russia the opinion has been voiced that his high reputation in England dates from the beginning of World War I, when out of goodwill for a powerful ally "the Russian soul was discovered." This is incorrect. As early as 1909, Arnold Bennett notes in his *Journal* (under February 26), plainly referring to Chekhov as a well-known writer: "More and more struck by Chekhov, and more and more inclined to write a lot of very short stories in the same technique." Gradually Bennett falls completely under Chekhov's spell. In January, 1921, after moving into a new flat, he notes in his *Journal*: "I bought another complete Chekhov for this flat yesterday. Couldn't do without it any longer." As time went on, Chekhov was recognized in England, by the élite, of course, as a writer of world stature. "No one's stock today stands higher with the best critics than Chekhov's," writes Somerset Maugham in the introduction to "Altogether." "In fact he has put every other story-writer's nose out of joint. To admire him is a proof of good taste; not to like him is to declare yourself a philistine."

Genuine connoisseurs of literature like Maugham or Bennett

appreciated the best in Chekhov. What it was that attracted the general public to him I could not say. Most successful in the West are his plays, on the whole inferior to his stories, and among the plays the weakest one, "The Seagull," which, to my mind, does not bear comparison with "Uncle Vania." As a matter of fact, an utterly insignificant trifle by which Chekhov himself set no store, "The Harmfulness of Tobacco," is quite a hit today in Paris. With all his modesty, unusual in a writer, Chekhov could not but be aware of his worth; nonetheless, he never expected his world fame and surely would have been greatly surprised by it.

As to such real masterpieces as "Ward No. 6," "A Dreary Story," "The Bishop," "The Steppe," and "The Darling" (this last was greatly admired by Tolstoy), they hardly could have earned him any special popularity in the West. Like Molière, like Cervantes, and like Tolstoy, Chekhov is a writer both for the sophisticate and for the public at large—a supreme achievement. Nevertheless, the average Western reader may be expected to find both the setting and the mood of these great stories rather outlandish. Somerset Maugham, of course, is the cream of the élite; yet, still, I wonder he was able to recognize so unerringly "The Bishop" as "one of the most beautiful and touching" of Chekhov's stories.

There are no differences of opinion with regard to Chekhov's moral personality. It is all too well known what kind of mutual relationships are usually prevalent in the literary world, even among distinguished writers; examples abound. Suffice it to call to mind the feud between Turgenev and Dostoevsky and how the latter ruthlessly lampooned Turgenev, transparently disguised as Kar-masinov, in *The Possessed*. And what about the relationship between Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser? Probably only in politics and the theatrical world is the hostility between prominent people even more pronounced than in the world of letters. Chekhov wrote about Russian critics and publicists: "Accusations of insanity, of evil motives, and indeed of every kind of crime, are the habitual adornment of even serious articles." He might have said the same thing of a great many writers of fiction. Against this background Chekhov himself stood out in a most admirable way. Whether in literature or in his private life, he always remained "the perfect gentleman." He was loved and respected by fellow-writers, and fellow-men in general, as few people are. After his death, Chekhov the man and the writer became the object of a deep national affection.

And yet, a psychologically significant feature, Chekhov himself was by no means very fond of people. Those he loved were few; and even then his feelings lacked ardor. Even love with him was of a "gentlemanly" kind. Letters in Russian often were concluded with the formula: "At your service. . . ." With Chekhov the willingness to serve was much more than a ready-made polite formula; it was one of the dominant traits of his character. Whenever he could, he would do a good turn for some person, most often to a writer, probably because he knew so many of them; for he certainly loved writers no more than other people, rather less. He would advise beginners and would carefully read their manuscripts, spending much time on this task. Often he may have hoped that these beginners would develop into writers of talent; yet he extended the same kindness to writers who were manifestly hopeless. And that was not all. He was a "good pal" almost in the schoolboy meaning of the word. Out of a sense of fellowship he resigned his honorary membership in the Academy because Maxim Gorky, for political reasons, had not been confirmed as Academician. Today, to any discerning person, there can be no comparison between the outstanding creative talent of Chekhov and the rather modest and often vulgar literary gift of Maxim Gorky. But at that time Gorky was Chekhov's chief rival for success, fame and financial rewards (Tolstoy, of course, was beyond competition; no one would have dreamed of challenging his preeminence). It is hard to tell how Chekhov really felt about Gorky. His letters and recorded remarks are rather ambiguous in this respect, yet Chekhov by then must have been fully aware that these letters inevitably would become public some day and probably did not always reveal all he thought. Ivan Bunin, Russia's only Nobel prize winner, a friend and favorite of Chekhov, once told me that Chekhov literally could not stand Gorky. Some of his letters contradict this; yet I believe that on the whole Bunin's testimony is close to the truth. Be that as it may, for Chekhov's decision to resign from the Academy it sufficed that Gorky was a fellow-writer and that politics had become involved in a matter of academic elections.

None of Chekhov's critics and biographers (not even the die-hard Bolsheviks among them) has claimed that he had ever "called to revolution"; this would have been too silly. Chekhov died in 1904 at the age of forty-four. Were it not for tuberculosis, he might have lived to witness the Soviet revolution. In that case he probably would have joined the ranks of the expatriates, and his writings would have appeared in the émigré press. Should he have stayed in

Russia, he probably would have stopped writing altogether. With his principles, his profound decency, his love of freedom—in particular, spiritual freedom—and with his unparalleled artistic integrity, he would have been unable, physically unable, to emulate the Ehrenburgs and the Fadeevs. In all likelihood he would have resumed his medical practice, both for a living and because he loved medicine. Yet all this is crystal-gazing; we can speak with certainty only of what he actually wrote. There is not the slightest hint of a "call to revolution" in any of his literary works or personal letters, just as there is no hint of it in the works of nearly all other Russian classics. Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Tiutchev, Griboedov, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Goncharov, Ostrovsky, and Bunin, whether liberal or conservative, all were moderates in politics. Even Tolstoy's "revolution" was of a very personal kind, confined to the spirit and quite unlike the actual Bolshevik upheaval.

Of course Chekhov wanted Russia to become a free country. I remember how, before the Revolution, a famous actor, a star of the Moscow Art Theatre, would interpret to me the meaning of certain oft-quoted "visionary" sentences from Chekhov's plays: they meant that Chekhov had been "craving for a constitution." Almost all the Russian critics, in times past, used to read a similar meaning into that famous passage from "*A Dreary Story*": "Every feeling and every thought exists in me separately, and in all my judgments on science, the theatre, literature, my pupils, and in all the pictures my imagination draws, even the most skillful analyst would fail to find what is called a general idea, or the god of living man. . . . And if that is not there, then there is nothing." There can be no doubt that Chekhov longed for political freedom, for the abolition of censorship, for all that is implied in a constitutional system of government. It is probable that like the professor Nikolai Stepanovich of "*A Dreary Story*" he deplored his own lack of a definite philosophy of life. Even so, all such interpretations contain a good measure of over-simplification: in particular the assumption that had Russia in Chekhov's time possessed a constitution, and had the professor possessed a "general idea" (we can very well imagine him, a few years later, as a member of the Cadet or the Octobrist party), then all that makes up the essential meaning of "*A Dreary Story*" would have been non-existent. Well, look at the Bolsheviks—they have a "general idea!"

It has been often said that Chekhov "denounced the evils of the old régime." Indeed, while not actually "denouncing" those evils (the term is utterly out of character), he certainly wrote a great deal

about them, and his journey to Sakhalin had no other purpose than to explore some of them. Such a shrewd critic as Arnold Bennett in this sense interpreted "Ward No. 6," which he rightly regarded as one of the most extraordinary and terrifying stories ever written. This story, as will be remembered, depicts the mental ward of a squalid provincial hospital. The physician in charge of it is slowly sucked in by ward No. 6 until he finally enters it himself as a patient. "It is a most terrible story," writes Bennett, "and one of the most violent instances of Chekhov's preoccupation with Russian slackness, inefficiency, and corruption." (Entry under April 27, 1921.) It is probably true that neither in the United States nor in Great Britain such an institution could exist today. I wonder what the situation was sixty years ago. Bennett, after all, did not write in Chekhov's lifetime. But this is not the point: what happened to Chekhov's doctor cannot be wholly accounted for by social conditions in Russia in the eighteen-nineties, nor can it be explained by some peculiar (and rather doubtful) traits of the Russian national character. And then, not even in old Russia did it happen every day that doctors would end up as inmates of their own insane asylums; this was just an instance of "going to the North Pole in a submarine."

Both the desire for a constitution and the "denunciations" may have touched at some point the main sphere of Chekhov's thought. Yet it is very difficult to determine the actual contents of that sphere. Some writers, like Father Sergey Bulgakov and, quite recently, B. Zaitsev regarded Chekhov's innate disposition as essentially religious. Others, like Evgeny Zamiatin, hold a directly opposite view. It has been often pointed out that Chekhov possessed "faith in the human being." Thus he wrote: "It is not difficult to believe in God. In him believed even the inquisitors, and Biron, and Arakcheev. No—it is in man that you should believe." And again: "My holy of holies is the human body, health, intelligence, talent, inspiration, love, and the most absolute freedom." This is not easy to understand. What, for instance, is meant by "the most absolute freedom"? And why is the human body not just a fact, given good health and the absence of deformities, a very fine thing indeed;—but the "holy of holies"?

His interest in philosophical concepts was not much deeper than that in political ideas. Intelligence, talent, and inspiration, all this he possessed, as well as an extremely keen mind. His general culture was considerable; he was always a great reader. He lacked, however,

that intense participation and interest in human thought that characterized Pushkin, Turgenev, and Tolstoy, who were among the most versatile and best-informed minds of their century. He disliked discussing abstract ideas. It would be possible to quote numerous passages scattered through his writings as evidence that his was a religious nature, and as many more to show that religion was alien to him. No less convincingly could it be shown that instead of ideas he was swayed by moods. This writer is inclined to support the latter view, without complete certainty, however, and with reservations. As a matter of fact, most of our judgments regarding Chekhov's thoughts and feelings require reservations.

It is unfair, of course, to hold a writer answerable for the opinions expressed by this or that of his fictional characters. Yet critics often have recourse to this method, and sometimes with reason. Evgeny Zamiatin has made use of this passage from "An Artist's Story": "If all of us, townspeople and country people, all without exception would agree to divide between us the labor mankind spends on the satisfaction of physical needs, each of us would perhaps need to work only for two or three hours a day. Imagine that we all, rich and poor, work only for three hours a day, and the rest of our time is free. . . . All of us together would devote our leisure to science and art. Just as the peasants sometimes work, the whole community together mending the roads, so all of us, as a community, would search for truth and the meaning of life, and I am convinced that the truth would be discovered very quickly; man would escape from this continual, agonizing, oppressive dread of death, and even from death itself."

Should we take these words as an intellectual proposition, we should have to admit regretfully that it is neither very original, being a reflection both of Tolstoy's philosophy and of some elementary socialist theories, nor, what is worse, in any way convincing. How is it possible to search for truth "all together, as a community"? Whence the certainty ("I am convinced . . .") that the truth then would be discovered quickly? And how would that truth rid mankind of the dread of death, and even of death itself? Chekhov himself never did anything in his life together with others "as a community." There existed philosophical societies in his time which surely would have welcomed him with open arms as a most desirable member. But difficult as it is to imagine him as a member of a political party or of the Imperial Duma, it is utterly impossible to conjure up a vision of Chekhov on the rostrum of a philosophical

society holding forth in the vein of Solovyov or Merezhkovsky. Whenever Merezhkovsky made an attempt to discuss some lofty subject with him, Chekhov would invariably react by suggesting a drink of vodka. If he ever did "search for truth," he did it all by himself. There is an entry in his notebook: "As I shall lie alone in my grave, so, in reality, I live alone." And as to "discovering the truth," he seems to have discovered very little.

The Soviet critic Korney Chukovsky has published a book: *Chekhov and His Craftsmanship*. I have not seen it and have read only one chapter which appeared in the New York Russian-language paper *Novoye Russkoye Slovo* (August 15, 1954). In this chapter he has skillfully assembled all the facts bearing witness to Chekhov's great "zest for living." "He loved to work with people and to roam about with people, but most of all he loved to have fun with people. So much of that youthful, undyingly joyful laughter had been bestowed on the young Chekhov, that whenever he could snatch an hour of leisure in the midst of his labors he would brim over with high spirits, and it was impossible not to laugh with him. To push into the hands of a Moscow policeman a heavy melon wrapped in thick paper, saying to him in a matter-of-fact manner: 'A bomb! . . . Now take it to the police station, but look out, be careful!'—or to try to convince a young woman-writer of almost saintly naïveté that his pigeons with the coffee-colored plumage were the result of a pigeon's mating with the cat that dwelt in the same yard, since the cat's fur was exactly the same shade—he enjoyed that kind of thing at all times."

This is true enough of Chekhov, especially the young Chekhov. There is no need to refer to biographies. One has only to re-read a story like "The Siren," for instance, in which the secretary of a court of justice drives the members of the court—and the readers—crazy with his description of various mouth-watering dishes. This story breathes such joy of living, such delight in the simple earthly pleasures accessible to all, that it is apt to make an invalid forget his ailments and rush out to have dinner—which is just what the assistant prosecutor in the story, afflicted with a stomach catarrh, is doing. "Ward No. 6"—"a most terrible thing"—is a masterpiece, but so is "The Siren," on a quite different level, of course. And yet the foreign reader, who knows of Chekhov only his famous great stories and plays, would be surprised by this aspect of the man as revealed by that chapter from Chukovsky's book; he probably cannot imagine such a Chekhov. Here is how even Somerset Maugham

sees him: "For Chekhov life is like a game of billiards in which you never pot the red, bring off a losing hazard or make a cannon, and should you by a miraculous chance get a fluke you will almost certainly cut the cloth. He sighs sadly because the futile do not succeed, the idle do not work, liars do not speak the truth and drunkards are not sober." Maugham brilliantly contrasts Chekhov with Maupassant who "was obsessed by the tiresome notion, common then to his countrymen, that it was a duty a man owed himself to hop into bed with every woman under forty that he met."

Chekhov certainly lacked a "system of ideas," a "definite philosophy of life," and he did not care. "Unfortunately, I am not a philosopher and not a theologian. I know perfectly well that I cannot live more than another six months; it might be supposed that I ought now to be chiefly concerned with the question of the shadowy life beyond the grave, and the visions that will visit my slumbers in the tomb. But for some reason my soul refuses to recognize these questions, though my mind is fully alive to their importance." Notwithstanding this last subordinate clause beginning with "though," Chekhov regarded these problems not only with indifference but also with a kind of disdainful irony, just as he regarded the people who wrote about them. To quote again Professor Nikolai Stepanovich of "A Dreary Story": "As for serious treatises in Russian on sociology, for instance, on art, and so on, I do not read them simply from timidity. In my childhood and early youth I had for some reason a terror of doorkeepers and attendants at the theatre, and that terror has remained with me to this day. It is said that we are only afraid of what we do not understand. And, indeed, it is very difficult to understand why doorkeepers and theatre attendants are so dignified, haughty, and majestically rude. I feel exactly the same terror when I read serious articles. Their extraordinary dignity, their bantering lordly tone, their familiar manner to foreign authors, their ability to split straws with dignity—all that is beyond my understanding." This is a witty passage. It is nonetheless true that not only fools wrote "on sociology, on art, and so on" in Russia, and surely not all serious writers indulged in "splitting straws."

If he had no "system of ideas," he had "moods," a great variety of changing moods. And his zest for living was slowly ebbing away as advancing consumption ravaged his body. Twelve years before his death he wrote: "I have no particular desire to live. I do not wish to die, but feel rather bored with life."

# Reminiscences of the February Revolution

## The April Crisis\*

### I

BY IRAKLI TSERETELLI

THE first crisis of the revolution occurred late in April, as a result of a conflict between the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government over a question of foreign policy.

Nothing had foreshadowed the conflict in the days that preceded it. On the contrary, everything seemed to indicate that the course of events had strengthened the accord between the Provisional Government and the Soviet democracy.<sup>1</sup>

The All-Russian Conference of Soviets that had just taken place had, by an overwhelming majority, approved the policy of cooperation pursued by the leading majority of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. The Conference, after having enlarged the Executive Committee through the election of new members and established it as the central national organ of the Soviets, had authorized it to continue that policy. The Bolsheviks, opposed to

\*This is a translation of the first excerpt, to be followed by others, from Chapter 10 of the author's unpublished reminiscences which are deposited in the Columbia University Archive of Russian and East European History and Culture and at Harvard University's Russian Research Center. This material is copyrighted by the author [Ed.].

<sup>1</sup>The terms "Soviet democracy" and "revolutionary democracy" frequently occurring in this article, were used in the Spring of 1917 to refer to the majority in the Soviets. The term "democracy" emphasized the fact that the majority in the Soviets at that time strove for a free, democratic state, as distinct from the Bolsheviks, who sought socialist dictatorship. At the same time, the terms "Soviet" and "revolutionary" served to emphasize that the Soviet majority wished to disassociate itself from the bourgeois democratic parties. One reason for that was that the latter had not taken part in the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the autocracy; nor had they advanced any program of radical democratic changes. It was the lack of such a program which had rallied the masses of workers, soldiers, and peasants around the Soviets from the outset of the Revolution.

cooperation, were a negligible minority at the Conference. The situation was the same in the local Soviets. The democratic organizations at the front, which reflected the mood of the frontline troops, overwhelmingly supported the decisions of the Conference. This circumstance made it imperative for the Provisional Government to preserve the unity with the Soviets not only in the field of domestic policies but also in that of foreign affairs.

The extent of the influence of the revolutionary democracy on the frontline troops was brought home to me by a trip to Minsk which left memorable impressions.

In the first half of April, shortly after the end of the All-Russian Conference, the Executive Committee was invited to send a delegation to an All-Front Congress in Minsk. Chkheidze,<sup>2</sup> Skobelev, Gvozdev, and I were chosen as delegates. This was to be the first direct contact between the Soviet representation and the front.

Upon our arrival in Minsk, the organizers of the Congress at once arranged for us to meet the commander of the Western front, General Gurko.

The high command of the army was opposed to the changes introduced into the organization of the army by the Revolution and had difficulty in adjusting itself to the new conditions. General Gurko was considered one of the most discontented; yet so long as he remained at his post he was compelled to call upon the democratic organizations of the army for assistance in maintaining discipline at the front.

He acquainted us with the difficulties he had to cope with. At the same time he showed himself well informed about the debates and resolutions of the All-Russian Conference dealing with the problem of war and peace and with the tasks of the army organizations. The General expressed satisfaction that the revolutionary democracy had so decisively recognized the necessity to uphold the fighting capacity of the armed forces, and voiced the hope that our delegation, in explaining those resolutions to the Congress, would create a moral atmosphere that would make it easier for the high command to preserve order at the front.

I asked the General about his relationship with the army's democratic organization.<sup>3</sup> "The war," he said, "requires of everyone the

<sup>2</sup>The Menshevik Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet [Ed.]

<sup>3</sup>After the February Revolution the term "democratic army organizations" was used to refer to the elected committees of soldiers' deputies, which were formed in the various army units. The Ministry of War and later the Army high command

ability to adjust himself to unexpected situations. The new system of using persuasion with the men is difficult, but up to now I have managed to enlist the help of the army organizations so as to prevent the worst." This was said in a rather worried tone, yet without irritation. On the other hand, when I asked him what he thought of the measures taken by the War Minister Guchkov to maintain order at the front, he surprised me by saying, with an effort to control himself yet with obvious exasperation: "It is difficult for civilians to understand the needs of the military command." I sought to explain to myself this difference in tone towards the revolutionaries and the War Minister. The revolutionaries, to the former Tsarist General, probably were an element so alien and remote that they failed to arouse any personal emotions, while Guchkov, a member of the General's own social class, who now played the master in his own professional sphere, by this very fact called forth his strong resentment.

The Congress held its meetings in the large building of the municipal theatre. Some 1500 delegates attended, nearly all from the ranks, with only a few score young officers among them. The chairman was a common soldier, the Socialist-Revolutionary Sorokaletov. In his welcoming speech, addressed to our delegation, he stressed the solidarity between the frontline troops and the revolutionary democracy of the nation. Three sessions were devoted to our reports, in which we acquainted the assembly with the policies of the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russian Conference. A huge majority of the delegates enthusiastically expressed their approval of these policies; however, there was no complete unanimity. At the very outset, while Skobelev was delivering his address, an incident occurred which threw a vivid light on the frictions at the front.

Skobelev was reporting on the Revolution in Petrograd and on the formation of the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government. This was his favorite topic. To lend color to his story he related various episodes from the first days of the Revolution, and a slight streak of demagogic, so typical of those days, ran through his speech. Describing how the men of a certain regiment left their barracks to fraternize with the people in revolt, he aroused the laughter of the audience with the remark that the officers of the regiment "went into hiding under the beds." The majority applauded; but in one

authorized these organizations and recognized their broad authority to protect the soldiers' civil rights, to further their political education, and to reform army life in conformity with the new order.

corner of the hall a storm of protests broke out. It came from the group of officer-delegates. After the session, some members of an army organization came up to us and told us that Skobelev's remark had touched the sorest spot of the army—the distrust of the officers. This, they said, was the chief obstacle to preserving order at the front. Skobelev's words could be taken as an encouragement of the hostility to the commanding officers, and it was for this reason that the group of officers had so hotly protested.

This incident, of course, distressed us. To correct his blunder, Skobelev, at the opening of the next session, took the floor for an explanation and made it clear that he had mentioned an individual case without any intention to cast aspersion on the whole body of officers, especially since so many of them had joined the Revolution from the first. He praised the self-sacrificing spirit of the officers who were defending their country side by side with the men, and added that he deeply regretted having given offense to the officers in the audience, their participation in this Congress being the best proof that the cooperation between officers and ranks, so indispensable to the defense of the country, had become a reality under the new régime. The audience cheered; and some of the officers came up to the platform to shake hands with Skobelev.

We had known that among the delegates there would be elements hostile to the policies of the Petrograd Soviet: a small group of Bolsheviks, on the one hand, and a more numerous right-wing group on the other. In consideration of this we had drawn up our reports in such a way as to forestall criticism both from the left and from the right.

Chkheidze's report dealt with the relationship between the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government. He recounted how the government time and again had appealed to the Soviet for help; and how, every time such help had been given, this had been represented by right-wing bourgeois elements as an intrusion of the Soviet into the functions of the government. The whole audience applauded his declaration that the aim of the Soviet democracy was not to establish a diarchy but to bring the policies of the Provisional Government into harmony with the aspirations of the broad democratic masses rallied round the Soviets.

Gvozdev, an outstanding representative of the labor intelligentsia which had crystallized within the workers' organizations even before the Revolution, told the Congress of the mood and temper of the Petrograd workers. His address was aimed at dispelling the rumors

spread among the frontline troops by rightist papers to the effect that the working class was engrossed in a selfish struggle for the improvement of its own conditions and was unmindful of its duty to the army at the front. However, when Gvozdev described the difficult conditions under which the factory workers were carrying on their work and their firm resolve to support in the rear the army's efforts at the front—his words met with a warm response which plainly showed that there was no prejudice against the workers among the delegates.

As for myself, I reported on the resolutions of the All-Russian Conference concerning the war and the peace campaign. These decisions naturally aroused intense interest. In advance of my address, representatives of various front organizations had submitted to me several questions the delegates wished me to clarify: was the Provisional Government taking any steps to bring peace nearer? What was the response of the Allied powers and of Germany to our call for a general peace? Would it be possible for revolutionary Russia to conclude a separate peace with Germany?

I related to the Congress what so far had been done by the Provisional Government and the Soviets to place the issue of a general peace before the allied and enemy powers; yet I warned of the difficulties that would have to be overcome in this matter. The audience followed my arguments with close attention. We found to our great satisfaction that these frontline soldiers, much as they welcomed the beginning of a campaign for a general peace, showed a quick grasp of the difficulties ahead—of the impossibility of a separate withdrawal from the war and of the necessity to maintain the fighting capacity of the army so long as there remained the threat of an enemy invasion. Our appeal to them to do their duty at the front was received with stormy applause.

This was the time when the wave of desertions that had started before the Revolution and had ominously swelled after it was receding, and many soldiers, influenced by the appeals of the revolutionary organizations, were returning to the front. Denunciations of defeatism, of the fraternization with the enemy, of the call to a separate peace, were all met with lively approval by the assembly. After my speech, I had to deal with a flood of questions submitted to me in writing. The bulk of the notes came from the right-wing opposition which dared not take its stand openly. One note, for instance, concerned the problem of desertion. I quote from the stenographic minutes of the Congress reprinted in the collection of

my speeches. The author of the note asserted that "after an appeal by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, in some units the men began going over to the German trenches, refusing to come back; some returned in an intoxicated condition." In reply to this I reminded the assembly of the appeal of the All-Russian Conference to the soldiers, and added: "As you know, comrades, we are calling you to the defense of the country, to the defense of democracy, and he who interprets our words as a call to desertion either acts from sinister motives or is a hopeless idiot." This was received, according to the stenographic record, with "laughter, applause, a voice calling out: 'the note comes from the policemen who are themselves deserting in large numbers under the pretext of illness!'" Some other questions from the right were of the same kind, "What law gives us the right to compel other nations—England, France, and Germany—to bow to the will of a small band of Russian workers and soldiers?" Such questions coming from the opposition delegates only served to emphasize their isolation within the Congress. The overwhelming majority of delegates vigorously demonstrated their agreement with our point of view when I pointed out that the call for a general peace proceeded not from "a small band of workers and soldiers" but from all revolutionary Russia, which was striving to awaken a fraternal response in the peoples of all other belligerent countries.

Yet there were also some questions of a different kind, from the ranks of the majority. One of them dealt with the most difficult problems that faced the Congress—that of the attitude towards the commanding officers. The fact was that despite the purge of the old body of commanders begun by the War Minister Guchkov, many officers notoriously hostile to the new régime still remained in command. Representatives of army organizations told us how difficult it was to make the soldiers, even those disposed to do their duty, obey the military orders of officers whom they suspected of treason and counter-revolutionary designs. The note in question read: "How can the troops be sure that an order to attack is in accordance with the will of the government and approved by the democracy?" To this I replied: "The army today is subordinate to the revolutionary government, which is directly controlled by the revolutionary democracy. Under these conditions, comrades, it is unthinkable that any military unit, when ordered to attack, should be in a position to argue whether that order did or did not conform to the actual will of the government. So long as the commanding officers are left at their posts under the responsibility of the

government now in power, their orders must be obeyed. In any instance, however, where there should be a valid reason to suspect a betrayal of the cause of the Revolution, the cause of free Russia, the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies should be notified; they will bring the matter to the attention of the Provisional Government so that the traitors may be arrested, as many already have been. (Applause)."

By decision of the Congress, the stenographic record of our reports as well as of the subsequent questions and answers was published as a separate pamphlet, which had a wide circulation at the front.

As for the left-wing opposition, it kept in the background at the Congress. On the chairman's platform, next to the Socialist-Revolutionary Sorokaletov, sat the Internationalist Pozern, who, we were told, had been very active in organizing this frontline Congress. According to his party affiliation he should have been with the leftist opposition; however, the general atmosphere of the Congress had obviously influenced him, and in talking with us he not only abstained from disputing our views but expressed himself in full agreement with them. He seemed to take a pride in pointing out that there were no more than twenty Bolsheviks among the delegates and even these, confronted with the general hostility, appeared reluctant to defend their program.

We spent two days in Minsk. Between sessions we talked with delegates from various army organizations, who informed us about the trends among the front-line troops. After two and a half years of war, they told us, the men were tired and longing for peace; hence their keen desire to know whether the government was doing anything to end the war. Nevertheless, a defeatist mood was not evident, and the need to defend the country was understood. The instances of insubordination that had occurred were a result of weariness and the distrust of commanding officers. But the moral authority of the democratic organizations was high and this authority alone made it possible to restore discipline and preserve the front from violence and disintegration.

A delegation of the Committee of the Imperial Duma had also been invited to the Congress and had attended its session the day before our arrival. However, Rodzianko<sup>4</sup> and his colleagues had been received rather coolly. All we saw and heard at the Congress convinced us that the democratic instincts of the masses made them reject both the rightist and leftist extremes and found the most

<sup>4</sup>An Octobrist, President of the Fourth Duma [Ed.].

adequate expression in the policies pursued by the majority of the revolutionary democracy.

Another memorable experience in Minsk was our visit to the military hospital.

The organizers of the Congress had let us know that the wounded men, upon learning of the presence in town of a delegation from the Petrograd Soviet, had expressed the wish to meet us. The visit to the hospital brought us even closer to the reality of war than the Congress of front-line soldiers. Here we were faced with the agonizing picture of suffering and death in the wake of war. Hundreds of badly wounded men lay prostrate on their cots; others hobbled about on crutches. They had not witnessed the Revolution themselves; but they, too, were deeply disturbed by the recent events. Those who were able to talk showered us with questions about the new order, the land, the prospects of peace. Chkheidze, as chairman of the Soviet, was the object of their particular interest. He went from cot to cot, and the feverish eyes of the wounded men looked up to him with hope and trust. Deeply moved, Chkheidze talked to them feelingly, promising them that the renewed fatherland would not forget its debt to them. Usually sparing of words and restrained in the expression of sentiment, he seemed transformed and knew how to find words of encouragement that went straight to the hearts of the wounded, who listened to him with faces lit up with hope.

On the journey back to Petrograd we exchanged our impressions of the Congress. We were fully aware that what we had observed there was only one facet, the obverse, of the soldiers' psychology. We realized that despite the apparent willingness of these soldiers to follow the directives of the organs of the revolutionary democracy, the attempts to put their willingness into full effect would meet with enormous difficulties among the war-weary troops. However, the fact that, notwithstanding all the symptoms of fatigue and anarchy, the troops still tended to follow those who called them to do their duty under the leadership of the new democratic organizations, the fact that defeatism and extremist demagogic were encountering the spontaneous resistance of the overwhelming majority, gave us the hope that within the organizations created by the Revolution new cadres would arise, capable to consolidate the democracy and to lend it the stability it would need in the threatening storms.

We were back in Petrograd on April 10. The most important item

on the agenda of the Executive Committee was the problem of the next steps in the field of foreign policy.

Shortly before our journey to Minsk, Chernov, leader of the Socialists-Revolutionaries, just returned from exile, had reported to the Executive Committee on the trends in Western Europe and the powerful impression produced there by the appeals of the Soviet to the democratic world. However, in Western Europe there were also circulating the declarations and interview statements of Foreign Minister Miliukov which ran counter to the Soviet's peace campaign. The impression had been created there that the Provisional Government was out of step with the Soviets in this vital matter. As for the declaration of the government renouncing all imperialistic war aims, it had received scant notice. Chernov had therefore proposed that the government be urged to convey the text of its "address to the citizens of the world" of March 27 to the Allies in the form of an official diplomatic note. To this we had agreed, and the Executive Committee had resolved that upon the return of the Soviet delegation from Minsk, the contact commission should undertake the necessary steps in that direction.

Accordingly, the contact commission, which now included Chernov, met with the Provisional Government on April 11 and submitted the matter to its consideration.

This was one of the friendliest meetings we ever had with the government. The members of the government congratulated Chernov, whose first appearance at the Mariinsky Palace this was, on his return from exile; some reminisced about former meetings with him, others questioned him about conditions in the West. This gave him the opportunity to introduce the subject of our call. Prince Lvov<sup>5</sup> remarked that he did not see any obstacles to the satisfaction of our request. Nekrasov<sup>6</sup> and Tereshchenko<sup>7</sup> plied us with questions about the Congress in Minsk. So, when Prince Lvov formally opened the meeting, there seemed to be complete harmony between us and the Provisional Government.

Chernov began by setting forth the arguments in favor of our proposal. Anticipating Miliukov's objections, he insisted in particular that the proposed action in no way endangered our relationship with our Western Allies. He referred to his observations of public

<sup>5</sup>Leader of the Union of Zemstvos, first Premier of the Provisional Government [Ed.]

<sup>6</sup>A Cadet, Minister of Communications, March-July, 1917 [Ed.]

<sup>7</sup>Minister of Finance, March-May, 1917 [Ed.]

opinion in the West and expressed his conviction that a declaration of the Provisional Government renouncing the old Russian imperialistic war aims would meet in a large part of public opinion there with a sympathetic reception and would stimulate a general revision of allied war aims under conditions most favorable to us.

After Chernov, Skobelev and I took the floor to support his proposal with arguments based on what we had observed at Minsk. We stressed the unanimous opinion of the members of military organizations at the front that a consolidation of the front was only possible if the troops could be convinced that the new government was doing everything in its power to achieve a democratic peace.

Miliukov reacted to our request with undisguised displeasure. An official note of the Provisional Government concerning war aims, he said, may cause alarm to the allied governments, since it would add fuel to the rumors current abroad that Russia was preparing to cut her ties with the Allies. But faced with our insistence and aware of the reluctance of the other members of the government to resume the wrangle with the Soviet that had preceded the declaration of March 27,<sup>8</sup> Miliukov finally gave in and promised us to dispatch the note in the near future.

Having obtained his consent, we did not go into the matter of the wording of the note. We took it for granted that it would contain nothing but the text of the declaration of March 27—a text drawn up by us jointly with the government after a lengthy debate.

It is an interesting fact that this parley of April 11 was one of the shortest we ever held with the government. Comparing it with the difficult and long-drawn-out negotiations prior to the adoption of the declaration of March 27, I accounted for this difference by the fact that in March a basic policy issue had to be resolved; and once a first important shift in the government's policy had been achieved, this made it easier to deal with Miliukov's opposition.

Rumors about the meeting of April 11 had leaked to the press, and a few days later one could read in the papers that the government was preparing a note to the Allies. This was promptly followed by a denial. Nevertheless the rumors aroused the keenest interest in Soviet circles and among the masses of their supporters. With growing impatience we were awaiting an announcement that the note had been sent.

It so happened that the government had been urging us for some

<sup>8</sup>Petrograd Soviets' appeal "to the people of the entire world" to conclude a democratic peace, and repudiating all imperialistic war aims [Ed.].

time to have the general assembly of the Petrograd Soviet pledge its support to the government's Liberty Loan. In principle, the Executive Committee had decided the question of supporting the loan in the affirmative. But now, with the suspense of waiting for the note, we thought it advisable to link the two issues and to postpone the vote on the loan in the Petrograd Soviet till the publication of the note to the Allies.

I telephoned Prince Lvov to inform him of our decision, in reply to his request to speed up the vote on the loan.

The meeting of the Petrograd Soviet, with the Liberty Loan on its agenda, was scheduled for April 16 and duly took place. On behalf of the Executive Committee we proposed that the discussion of the loan be postponed till the dispatch of the expected note, and the motion was approved by the assembly.

On April 19 the long-awaited notification by Prince Lvov, addressed to me, at last reached the Tavrichesky Palace. I opened the envelope in the presence of Chkheidze, Skobelev, Dan, and several other members of the Committee, and read out the text to them. We were stunned by what it contained.

The message apprised us that the Minister of Foreign Affairs had directed our ambassadors accredited to allied powers to communicate the text of the address "to the citizens of the world" of March 27 to the respective governments. The "address," however, was supplemented with a commentary to the effect that "the general principles stated by the Provisional Government (in its 'address to the people of the world') were in full accord with the lofty ideas constantly voiced by many prominent statesmen of the allied powers," and that the Provisional Government "having abiding confidence in the victorious completion of the present war in full accord with the Allies, was firmly convinced that the problems raised by this war would be solved in such a spirit as to lay solid foundations for a lasting peace, and that the progressive democracies of the world, inspired by the same ideals, would find a way to establish the guarantees and the sanctions necessary to prevent new bloody conflicts in the future."

To understand the effect of this note upon us,<sup>9</sup> one has to conjure up the atmosphere of the revolutionary Russia of those days and the campaign then conducted by the Soviet democracy. In our appeals to the socialist parties of the world, in our press, in our resolutions

<sup>9</sup>The reference to "guarantees" and "sanctions" contradicted the appeal of March 27 [Ed.]

and speeches addressed to the people and the army, we constantly emphasized that the declaration of the Provisional Government of March 27 was the first act, since the beginning of the war, by which one of the belligerent powers renounced all imperialistic war aims. We never tired of urging the public opinion of the democratic countries to support our initiative and to compel their own governments to repudiate imperialistic aims and to work out a new platform for a general democratic peace. It was for these reasons that we had insisted on a formal note to communicate the declaration of March 27 to the Allies.

A fight against this policy of a democratic peace was being waged, both in Russia and abroad, under slogans "war to the victorious end" or "war till the establishment of sanctions and guarantees" imposed on the defeated enemy. And now, in a note ostensibly intended to elucidate the meaning of the act of March 27, Miliukov declared these very slogans, abhorrent to the revolutionary democracy, to be those of the Provisional Government! And this note, which was nothing but a repudiation of the basic principles of the Soviets' foreign policy, was being presented to the revolutionary democracy as a compliance with its request.

The worst of it was that the note had already been dispatched, and the text had been given to the press.

If Miliukov had consciously striven to cause a rift between the Soviets and the government, he could not have used a better method than this document. This was the impression of all those present. Amazement and indignation were shared by all. Chkheidze said nothing for a long while, listening to the angry exclamations of the others. Then he turned to me and said in a low voice, with the accent of deep conviction: "Miliukov is the evil genius of the Revolution."

The news that the text of the note had been received, quickly spread through the Tavrichesky Palace, and members of the Executive Committee dropped in, one after another, to acquaint themselves with the message. Before the opening of the session a kind of improvised conference of those who were present took place. In an animated exchange of opinions not only the members of the left-wing opposition but also some of the majority characterized the note as a provocation, an act of defiance. Feelings were running high. Skobelev, myself, and some others in vain tried to soothe the rising passions. Eager to hear some reassuring information, Bramson asked me whether in my opinion, based on my experience in nego-

tiating with the government, the note had been phrased as it was on purpose, in order to disavow the policy of the Soviet democracy.

To this I replied that, in my judgment, the only member of the government actually intent on opposing a government foreign policy to that of the Soviets, was Miliukov. As for the majority of the ministers, they had, in all our negotiations, displayed the desire to establish a line of conduct in harmony with ours. This being the case, I said, I can explain the adoption of this text by the government only as an act of amazing thoughtlessness on the part of the majority of its members. Very likely Miliukov, with his usual insistence, had kept hammering on the theme that his consent to communicate to the Allies the declaration of March 27 in a formal note was already an enormous concession to Soviet democracy, in which he had acquiesced with great reluctance; and probably as a compensation for this concession he had obtained the assent of the others to the inclusion of his commentary. The other ministers may have assumed that the gratification of our desire to have the "Address" transmitted to the Allies would make us ready to accept the accompanying commentary, to which they apparently had failed to give their close attention.

"All these misunderstandings," said one of the left-wing members of the Executive Committee, "are only possible because we fail to use our full voice in talking to the government. Why has the contact commission failed up to now to urge the government to submit to the Allies the issue of a democratic peace as it was formulated by the Soviet manifesto of March 14?"

"I understand your displeasure with the note," replied Skobelev. "Still, we should not run to extremes. When the Soviet was drawing up its Manifesto, it had to consider only the Russian Revolution, the Russian wide-gauge track. The government, on the other hand, in addressing itself to foreign governments through diplomatic channels, has to keep in mind the conditions in foreign countries, the foreign narrow-gauge track. The cause of a general peace encounters obstacles in the public opinion of these countries, obstacles the Russian Revolution will have to overcome gradually, step by step, if it wants to avoid a collapse. What we find unacceptable in Miliukov's note is not the consideration of existing difficulties but the fact that these difficulties are used as a pretext to substitute the imperialistic slogans for those of the Russian Revolution."

By then most members of the Executive Committee had arrived,

and Chkheidze opened the meeting in an atmosphere of extreme tension.

The excitement was due to the awareness that a crisis was imminent. There were no differences of opinion with regard to the note. All were agreed that it could not be accepted by the Executive Committee as satisfactory. The debate, therefore, centered on the question of ways and means to solve the conflict.

At that time the spokesmen for the left-wing opposition were still the Internationalists, to whom the Bolshevik fraction of the Executive Committee gladly left the initiative of extremist proposals. The Internationalist Yurenev now took the floor to deliver a forceful speech. He insisted that the note had exposed the utter uselessness of negotiations with the government; now was the time for the masses to step in; an appeal to the masses should be our reply to the provocation of the government. Mass action alone would reveal to the government and to the whole world the true will of the Russian Revolution.

Shliapnikov, then a left-wing Bolshevik, also insisted on an appeal to the masses. His spiteful comments on Miliukov and the whole Provisional Government were marked by a deep-rooted class hatred of the bourgeoisie.

But even among the leading majority of the Executive Committee the resentment was so great that some of its members could see no other way out than to call on the masses to demonstrate against the government. Bogdanov,<sup>10</sup> normally even-tempered and unruffled, yet capable of impulsive speech and action under stress, was beside himself with rage. Miliukov's note, he said, strikes a blow first of all against us, the representatives of the majority of the Executive Committee. Direct negotiations between the Executive Committee and the Provisional Government have no longer any justification. The time has come for the masses to go into action. Their appearance on the scene is the only thing that would have any real influence on the government.

Members of the Labor Group (Trudoviki) Stankevich and Bramson tried to soothe the storm. There was no need, they said, to exaggerate the importance of the accompanying note. After all, the full text of the declaration of March 27, which contained the repudiation of imperialistic war aims, had been officially communicated to the allied governments. Those acquainted with the situation inside the government realize that Miliukov's commentary was but

<sup>10</sup>Menshevik leader in the Petrograd Soviet [Ed.]

another of his misplaced stratagems and in no way reflected the views of the government as a whole. Bramson pointed out that even Miliukov's best friends regarded him as a "genius of tactlessness." Was it permissible, because of the tactlessness of a single minister, to gamble with the fate of the national Revolution?

Kamenev, who better than Shliapnikov represented the then dominant tactics of the Bolshevik organization, made a plain attempt to release the Bolsheviks from the responsibility for an eventual call to the masses. Miliukov's note, he said, only served to confirm what the Bolshevik party had maintained all along: that not a democratic peace but "war to the victorious end" was the true slogan of the bourgeoisie. Miliukov and his colleagues were representatives of that class and unable to carry out a different policy. An anti-imperialist policy could be put into effect only after the removal of the present government and its replacement by a government of the revolutionary democracy. The Executive Committee was opposed to this. If some of its members were now supporting an appeal to the masses, they were doing this with the purpose to compel a bourgeois government to carry out policies alien to it. The Bolsheviks had no such illusions. However, should a majority of the Executive Committee decide in favor of such an appeal, the Bolsheviks would support it in a body, since street demonstrations are the best school for the political education of the masses and the best method to pave the way for the replacement of the bourgeois government by one of the revolutionary democracy.

Of the members of the contact commission, Chernov and Sukhanov<sup>11</sup> were absent. On behalf of the three members present, Chkhcheidze, Skobelev, and myself, I declared that, in principle, there could be no disagreement about the evaluation of the note; it was a clear violation of the agreement which had made possible our co-operation in foreign policy with the government. The government ought to give us some tangible satisfaction, to show to the nation and to the world that its foreign policy still followed the line laid down by the declaration of March 27 and not that of Miliukov's accompanying note.

Yet as regards the appeal to the masses, I went on, we disagree not only with the Bolsheviks, who plan to use street demonstrations for their propaganda ends, but also with those among our comrades who have no intention to overthrow the government yet are willing

<sup>11</sup>Journalist, at one time an S.R., later a United Internationalist, author of *Zapiski o revolutsii* [Ed.].

to urge the masses to fight against it. In the present tense and emotional atmosphere it is not difficult to arouse the masses against the government; yet it is very doubtful whether these energies once released could be kept under control and from developing into a civil war. Soviet democracy is certainly strong enough to overthrow the government; yet it possesses neither enough solid influence with all circles of the population nor enough trained democratic cadres to organize on its own a government that would be indisputably recognized by the majority of the nation and would be able to ensure the fulfilment of the pressing economic and political needs of the country.

This is the situation, I continued, and it compels us to act with caution. Even more so it compels the Provisional Government to proceed cautiously, since it knows that without the support of the Soviets it cannot exist. This being so, we have every reason to presume that even without calling the masses into action we shall be able to make the government comply with the demands we are going to submit to it.

For all these reasons I proposed that, before issuing an appeal to the masses, we attempt to settle the conflict through new negotiations with the government. This proposition, supported by Dan<sup>12</sup> and Gots,<sup>13</sup> was adopted by the majority.

Nevertheless, the conflict with the government had come to a head, and the consequences of this fact soon became manifest.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

<sup>12</sup>Menshevik Soviet leader [Ed.]

<sup>13</sup>Member of Central Committee and the Combat Organization of the S.R. Party [Ed.]

# The Morozovs

BY VALENTINE TSCHEBOTARIEFF BILL

THE village of Zuevo lies fifty miles to the East of Moscow, on the flat, sandy bank of the river Kliazma. In the winter of 1812, early in the morning, a middle aged peasant set out from the village, a heavy, tightly packed bundle strapped to his back. His name was Savva Morozov. He was a serf belonging, like the rest of the hundred and fifty or so inhabitants of Zuevo, to Count Riumin. He was a strongly built man and he walked with determination. He had need of strength, and of tenacity too, for it was his practice to cover the entire fifty miles from Zuevo to Moscow in a single day of walking.

A month or so earlier, Napoleon had fled from the Russian capital, plunging into his ill-fated retreat westward. Large sections of the city were burned, but already the residents were returning and the city was beginning to stir again. Savva knocked at the doors of mansions and wealthy homes where lights shone! If admitted, he would open his bundle and display a bright array of silk ribbons, delicate linen, exquisite open-work textures and stout cloth. These were the products of his and his wife's hands, aided by their two older sons, Elissei, aged fourteen, and Zakhар, aged ten. Savva had little trouble selling his wares, since supplies to the city's shops were as yet slow in coming. The quality of his work and the reliability and promptness of his deliveries soon assured him of a growing circle of customers. On the days of his trip to Moscow, the most enthusiastic and eager customers would send out a messenger or meet Savva themselves before he reached the gates of the city, so as to have first choice among his treasures. Savva's scrupulous honesty increased his fame — and his opportunities. Peasants from neighboring villages would bring him their savings for safekeeping, thus increasing Savva's funds. He put the money to work in his business.

By 1820, Savva had accumulated enough money to approach his master, Count Riumin, with a request to be permitted to buy his and his family's freedom. He now had four sons, all old enough to help in their parents' enterprise. Elissei was now twenty-two, Zakhар eighteen, Abram thirteen and even Ivan, aged eight, was put to work. The request was granted. Savva paid the fabulous sum of

17,000 rubles. Count Riumin stipulated, however, that any children born to Savva hereafter would remain in bondage. So Timothy, born in 1823, remained a serf for over another decade. The price his father had then to pay to free his fifth and youngest son by far surpassed the sum paid to Riumin in 1820 to set the Morozov family on the road to freedom.

Life had never been easy for Savva. He was born in Zuevo in 1770, son of the serf Vassili Morozov. At an early age he was set to help his father in fishing and tending the cattle. In his teens, he was hired as a weaver by Kononov, owner of a small silk factory in Zuevo. Savva got his food, lodgings and five rubles a year. This money he passed on to his father to help him pay the yearly dues to their landlord and master, Count Riumin.

An important turning point in Savva's life was the day on which the current recruiting quota was announced in the village of Zuevo. Recruiting was the method then employed by the Russian government to fill the ranks of the standing army. The total number of required draftees would be announced and a quota system worked out by the government, each recruit to be supplied by an equal, stipulated number of peasant families. No physical or mental standards were set and the choice of the individual was left to the peasant commune — a matter which was usually decided by lot. This time, the lot fell to Savva. A recruit was drafted for life. To avoid this fate, Savva took a large loan from his employer Kononov, which enabled him to find a substitute, to whom the money was so desirable that he did not shrink from the prospect of a lifetime spent in barracks, camps, and on battlefields. To repay the loan, Savva asked his employer to replace the current method of remuneration with piece work payments. Kononov agreed. Within two years, with the energetic assistance of his young wife Uliana, Savva had paid off his loan.

This gave him the courage and incentive to start his own business. Uliana had brought him a dowry of five rubles. What was equally important, she was famous in Zuevo for her sense of color and skill in dyeing fabrics. In 1797, Savva received permission from his master, Count Riumin, to open a small silk ribbon factory in Zuevo. Business grew rapidly and prospered, especially during the Napoleonic War period. To the silk ribbon factory was added a wool cloth mill in Nikolsk, facing Zuevo on the steep right bank of the river Kliazma. At first, all savings were laid aside for the purchase of the family's freedom. After this feat was accomplished, Savva

concentrated all his efforts on expanding and improving his business. In 1837, the cloth mill alone consisted of eleven buildings and employed close to two hundred workers.

This was the time when cotton, imported in raw form from America, was rapidly coming to the fore as the leading fiber of the textile industry, eclipsing both wool and flax in volume of output, cheapness, versatility of texture, and adaptability to a large variety of uses. Savva was quick to see the opportunity and converted his factories to cotton weaving. He was among the first manufacturers in Russia to import power looms from England which permitted a weaver to operate several machines simultaneously and to increase production manyfold. As restrictions on England's export of machinery were lifted in the 1840's, Savva also imported spinning jennies and water frames and added a cotton spinning factory to his weaving industry in Nikolsk.

In the early 1850's over 1,000 workers were employed in Savva Morozov's enterprise. He was now in his eighties and his strength was ebbing. The burden of managing the large and ever growing business passed on to the shoulders of Savva's sons, particularly of the youngest and ablest one, Timothy. The oldest son Elissei had started his own textile business in the 1830's. Following his father's wishes, his factory was founded in Nikolsk also, as an annex to the parent enterprise. During Elissei's lifetime, he died in 1868, this branch of the Morozov business remained small, for Elissei was only mildly interested in business. His chief concern was religious problems, especially those related to the Church schism which had rocked the Russian Orthodox community to its foundations in the middle of the seventeenth century and led to the irreparable secession of the "Old Believers," parishioners who rebelled against Church reforms then introduced by the Patriarch Nikon. Elissei wrote a long treatise on the origin of the concept of Anti-Christ. The essay was never published, but its author became widely known under the nickname of "Anti-Christ Professor." Elissei's only son Vikul did not share his father's scholarly and spiritual interests and reverted to the tradition of shrewd and practical business sense so aptly displayed by his grandfather Savva. Under Vikul's and Vikul's sons' management the firm prospered and expanded.

Savva's second son Zakhar had become independent in the 1840's taking over a branch of his father's business founded in the district's capital of Bogorodsk and later transferred to the nearby village of Glukhovo. Zakhar did not inherit his father's strength, energy, and

longevity. He died in 1857, leaving his enterprise to his sons. Although this firm, too, expanded during the second half of the nineteenth century, it remained the smallest of all Morozov enterprises.

A year before Zakhar's death, Savva had also lost his third son, Abram. This left only Ivan and Timothy for Savva to lean on, and two grandchildren, sons of the deceased Abram, to provide for. Savva himself died in 1860, at the age of ninety, just one year too soon to witness the emancipation of the serfs and the fall of servitude. Freedom, which Savva had spent such stupendous efforts and so much money to attain, was now a common privilege to be enjoyed by all — legally at least.

Until his very death Savva had retained the keen perception and farsightedness which had brought him such rich rewards throughout his life. In 1859 he had advised his son Timothy to look for new localities outside the orbit of Moscow which would be suitable for textile enterprises, for the debacle of the Crimean War in 1855 was followed by endeavors of the government to raise Russia's productive capacity and military fitness. As part of these endeavors, industrial expansion was encouraged and stimulated, sending upward the price of labor and fuel in the vicinity of Moscow, the leading industrial center. Timothy selected Tver, a town some hundred miles northwest of Moscow for the construction of a new cotton spinning and weaving factory. Tver was a particularly attractive location, since it lay on the railroad connecting Moscow with Petersburg, which had been opened in 1851. The Tver factory became the fourth separate enterprise of the Morozov family. In 1872 Timothy placed his two nephews, sons of his late brother Abram, in charge of the enterprise. They were then thirty-three and twenty-nine years old respectively and Timothy had seen to it that they acquired the training and experience necessary for the job.

Now Timothy could devote his undivided attention to the parent enterprise in Zuevo-Nikolsk. His brother Ivan had died in 1864, and from then on Timothy was the sole and undisputed master of this largest and most important unit of the Morozov business. A portrait of Timothy, painted in his later years, shows a plain peasant face framed with snow white hair and beard. Two features stand out: the shrewd eyes and the determined, cruel twist of his mouth. The shrewdness was, without doubt, an inheritance from his father. Savva would have been rightly proud of the bold, imaginative sweep of Timothy's industrial and financial plans. He reorganized the

family firm, converting it into a limited liability company. He remained the largest shareholder, but succeeded in attracting a staff of competent financial and technical assistants, importing foreign engineers by the score, largely from England, stronghold of the textile industry. Timothy spent large sums for the training of Russian engineers also. He established scholarships for graduates of the Imperial Technical College to enable them to continue their studies abroad and offered them jobs upon their return.

The bulk of industrial machinery used in Russian factories during the first few decades after the emancipation was imported from abroad. Timothy was the first to deviate from this practice. In 1881 he founded a factory for the production of domestic mechanical looms. These domestic machines proved more expensive than the imported ones. But soon thereafter the Russian government raised the tariffs sharply on imports of foreign machinery and a domestic machine production got under way, in which Timothy had played a pioneering role.

In the 1880's Timothy Morozov was the leading industrialist in Russia. The Zuevo-Nikolsk factories covered an area of some two and a half square miles. The yearly net profit of the enterprise surpassed two million rubles. The shrewd eyes of Timothy had missed none of the opportunities which made such profits possible. Yet the shrewdness stemmed from a natural peasant ability rather than from the intelligence of a subtle, trained, and cultivated mind. The tireless concentration on business had left Timothy without time or desire for education. He was the last of the Morozov family to gain his freedom and the world of bondage into which he was born, the division of humanity into masters and serfs, made an indelible impression on his mind. Once he became a master himself, he exercised his authority with ruthless despotism. His belief in the power and usefulness of force was absolute. He tolerated no criticism or contradiction and expected his wishes and decisions to be carried out blindly, promptly, and meticulously. His office employees shook and trembled in fear of the uncontrolled outbursts of his wrath, which usually ended with the abrupt and immediate dismissal of whoever had called forth his anger.

In the management of his factory workers Timothy applied the same methods of tyrannical force. In the early 1880's he imposed a system of severe and crushing fines upon his labor force for defects in production, lateness, absence from work, drunkenness, and other less serious offenses. Such trivial deviations from a perfect per-

formance brought a fine, that even the best workers suffered a deduction of some fifteen percent from their wages, while less skilled and reliable workmen saw their earnings dwindle by twenty-five to fifty percent, leaving them at times with funds inadequate to pay even the grocery bill. At the time, the number of workers employed in Timothy's enterprise amounted to some 8,000 men. The underground revolutionary groups spreading throughout Russian industry with increasing success during this decade did not fail to fan the discontent of this large, concentrated labor group and to incite them to revolt. In 1885 their propaganda activities bore fruit and the Morozov workers went on strike. In the annals of the Russian revolution this strike occupies an important place. It is listed as the first exhibit of organized workers' opposition to capitalist oppression, the grand opening of ever mounting and spreading rebellion. The next scene after the Morozov strike was the general revolt of the textile weavers in 1896-97, then the Revolution of 1905, and after that the final collapse of the old order in 1917. But in 1885, Timothy Morozov did not foresee this chain of events. So farsighted in matters of a technical and financial nature, he was blind and insensitive when questions of human welfare and psychology were involved. The strike was settled by granting the workers minor concessions. But the system of fines remained largely in effect until Timothy's death in 1889.

Timothy had named the older of his two sons, born in 1861, after his father Savva. Timothy's character had been molded, to a considerable extent, by the memory of bondage during his early youth. In the life of Savva junior, too, there was one decisive and vividly remembered factor: the violence and drama of the workers' strike in 1885, called forth by his father's inhuman despotism. To prevent the recurrence of such clashes, to improve working conditions in the Morozov factories, became one of Savva's chief concerns after he took over the management upon his father's death. Savva's younger brother Sergei was not interested in business. He preferred to lead a life of leisure and to enjoy the fruits of luxury and European culture, of which his father had been so inexplicably unappreciative. Sergei's picture conveys the impression of weakness combined with refinement and careful grooming.

So there was no interference on the part of the disinterested Sergei when Savva junior decided to build new, light, and airy living quarters for the workmen and their families. Savva improved medical care with remarkable efficiency and reduced the accident

rate. And most important of all, he did away with the system of fines. Under his management the firm continued to expand and prosper. The yearly net profits were now close to three million rubles.

A photograph of Savva Morozov shows a large, strongly built man with dark hair and a clever face clouded by an expression of sadness and frustration. The chief source of frustration was Savva's mother, Maria Fedorovna Morozov, largest shareholder of the family enterprise. From her portrait, she coldly looks down through her spectacles upon the world, erect, stiff, and tightlipped. She thoroughly disapproved of Savva's efforts to improve the workers' lot. She frowned at his admiration for Maxim Gorky, the writer who extolled the homeless tramps and drifting vagabonds, who wrote so eloquently of human dignity and need for freedom and who was repeatedly arrested for his writings and subversive revolutionary activities. Decades later, Savva Morozov was to appear on the pages of Gorky's vast historical novel *Life of Klim Samgin* which gives a broad panorama of the last forty years of Tsarist Russia. Here, Gorky describes Savva as a solid, sturdy man "with a Tartar face," so clumsy, angular, and dark that Gorky likens him to a flat iron (*chugunnyi utiug*), one of those crude, heavy cast iron tools once used for pressing clothes.

Rumors were reaching Savva's mother that her son was contributing large sums to the Social Democratic Party, of which Gorky was a staunch adherent. Early in 1905 she learned that Savva had paid 10,000 rubles to bail Gorky out of prison. But the lid blew off her patience when Savva, watching the clouds of a new revolutionary gathering on the horizon, approached her with a plan to bridge the chasm between labor and management by letting the workers of the Morozov enterprise share in the profits of the company. Maria Fedorovna's reaction was quick and in keeping with the methods of her late husband Timothy. In April, 1905, she removed her son from the management of the firm. A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself.

The history of the Morozov family is interesting on various counts, not only as a dramatic record of human struggle, success, and tragedy; it is also a unique document on the history of the Russian middle class. There is, to be sure, much in the rise and fall of this family which is exceptional, the measure of success attained, the tragic end of Savva. But there is a great deal more in it which is typical of the times and of the development of Russian bourgeoisie:

the painful efforts of the first generation to extricate themselves from the burden of servitude, the coldblooded, uncompromising tyranny displayed by the second generation, and the rising tide of revolution which confronted the third. These are all among the salient factors marking the road of the Russian middle class.

Moreover, there arises the question — interesting in spite of being mere conjecture and speculation — whether and to what extent Gorky may have used the history of the Morozov family as a source of material for his novels on the Russian middle class, particularly for his *The Artamonov Business*. A comparison between the fortunes of the Morozovs and the Artamonovs discloses a number of interesting parallels.

# The Scythians

BY ALEXANDER BLOK

Translated from the Russian

BY ROBIN KEMBALL

BLOK completed "The Twelve" on January 28, 1918. The very next day, he set to work on "The Scythians"; by the evening of the 30th, the second draft was ready, and the poem virtually complete; the final version — differing only slightly from the second draft — appeared in print one week later.<sup>1</sup>

The poem had meanwhile been maturing in Blok's mind for just over two weeks. On January 11, while still busy with "The Twelve," he had written in his diary in bitter and violent terms of the breakdown in the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. In this outburst, Blok gave vent to many of the ideas which inspired and were subsequently incorporated in "The Scythians."

At the same time, Blok's thoughts, of course, were moving on a far higher plane than any mere political question of Russo-German relations.

More unmistakably than the controversial "Twelve," "The Scythians" clearly shows that his conception of events was historical rather than political, national rather than revolutionary as such. On January 29, he made a note in his diary: "The war is over. Peace is not yet signed." This he underlined in red pencil, and added the words: "Asia and Europe" — which may fairly be taken as the theme of his whole poem.<sup>2</sup>

Blok's intuition and premonition of events; his understanding of Russia's intrinsic mission as an Asiatic as well as a European power; of the dangers facing Europe if she did not put an end to her own interneccine strife — none of this was more convincingly demonstrat-

<sup>1</sup>In *Znamya Truda*, No. 137, February 7/20, 1918. The version translated here is from the "official" edition of Blok's complete works (Leningrad, Izdatelstvo Pisatelei v Leningrade, 1932-1936, 12 vols., Vol. V, pp. 21-24), as finally copied out by Blok, after amendments and corrections, into an exercise-book he used for this purpose.

<sup>2</sup>Blok took his epigram, not for the first time, from Vladimir Soloviov, to whose poem "Panmongolism" he attached a quite exceptional importance.

ed, more amply justified, than today. For Blok, as for the Slavophiles, Russia's "Asiatic mien," so far from being a cause for shame, represented an historical and geographical truth, which the world might disparage if it chose, but could only ignore at its peril.

The same unshakeable faith in Russia's destiny, the same pride in her greatness, the same all-consuming love of country that had once inspired "Kulikovo," "New America," and the rest of the "Songs of Russia"—these same feelings were now to give rise to the last of Blok's great poems. Then, somehow, the "music" he had listened to all his life died away—and, with it, the creative powers of the most gifted Russian poet this century has so far produced.

*Panmongolism! The name, though savage,  
yet rings caressful in my ear.*

Vladimir Soloviov

Mere millions — you. We — teem, and teem, and teem.

You want to fight? Come on, then — try it!

We're — Scythians — yes! With Asiatic mien

We watch you, gloating, through our slit-squint eyelids.

For you — long years. For us — alone one hour.

We, like brute serfs, in blind obedience,

Have held our shield between two warring powers —

The Mongols and the Europeans!

For years, long years, your ancient furnace forged

And dulled the avalanches' rumble,

And what a wanton tale of woe was yours

When Lisbon and Messina crumbled!

A thousand years you've watched this East of ours,

Amassed and melted down our jewels,

Contemptuously, have counted but the hour

When you could train your guns on to us!

That hour has struck. Misfortune beats her wings,

You multiply your insults daily.

The day will come when nothing more remains,

Not one trace, of your *Paestums*, maybe!

Old world! Before you fall in ruins — think,  
While yet you writhe in sweetest torture,  
How Oedipus, before the ageless Sphinx'  
Enigma, once, was moved to caution!

So, Russia — Sphinx — triumphant, sorrowed, too —  
With black blood flows, in fearful wildness,  
Her eyes glare deep, glare deep, glare deep at you,  
With hatred and — with loving-kindness!

Yes, so to love, as lies within our blood,  
Not one of you has loved in ages!  
You have forgotten that there is such love  
That burns and, burning, lays in ashes!

We love them all — cold numbers' heartless heat,  
The gift of heavenly visions in us,  
We understand them all — keen Gallic wit  
And gloomy-weighed Germanic genius.

Remember all — the streets of Paris' hell,  
The gentle coolnesses of Venice,  
The lemon groves — their distant, perfumed smell —  
And, smoke-enswathed, Cologne's immenseness . . .

We love the flesh — its taste, its pinkish tone,  
The scent of flesh, too — choking, deathsome . . .  
Are we to blame, then, if we crunch your bones  
When our unwieldy paws caress them?

It's nothing new for us to seize the rein,  
To curb our prancing, fiery chargers,  
To bend their stubborn will, to break them in,  
And let them know that we're the masters . . .

Come on, then, come! — into the arms of peace.  
Have done with war and all its horrors.  
Before it's all too late — now, comrades, sheathe  
Your age-old sword, and we'll be — brothers!

And if not — well, we've nothing left to lose,  
We, too, can be perfidious traitors.  
For years, long years, you'll stand — accursed, accused  
Of crippled coming generations.

We'll blaze a trail — we'll beat a broad-flung track  
Through the dense woods that fringe, behind you,  
The gentle brow of Europe. We'll be back —  
Our Asiatic mugs will find you.

Come on, then — on, unto the Urals. We'll  
Prepare meanwhile the field of battle  
Where cold machines of calculated steel  
Shall meet the savage Mongol rabble.

But as for us — we'll no more be your shield;  
Ourselves no longer sword unsheathing,  
Through narrow eyes we'll scan the battlefield  
And watch the mortal combat seething.

We shall not turn aside when raging Huns  
Go delving into dead men's pockets,  
Turn churches into stables, burn the towns,  
And roast their white-flesh comrades' bodies . . .

For the last time — Old world, come to! The feast  
Of peace-fraternal toil awaits you.  
For the last time — the fair, fraternal feast.  
And our barbarian lyre invites you.

# Secret Religious Organizations in the U.S.S.R.

BY CONSTANTINE KRYPTON

THE structure of the Soviet state was formed during the Civil War. The Orthodox Church, whose entire being had been bound up with the country's history, survived those years. Most of the churches, both rural and urban, emerged intact; most of the priests and bishops, headed by the Moscow Patriarch, also survived.

At first, the Orthodox Church appeared able to retain its independence under the Soviet dictatorship. Moreover, many of the superficialities associated with the official position of the Church under the old regime had been eliminated. The faithful had been tested, and the clergy itself had been strengthened. Literally millions of people packed the churches for twenty years. This situation, obviously, proved a serious threat to the Soviet State.

The seizure of the Church's treasures and the appearance of the so-called "Living Church" in 1923 were the first serious blows against the Church. At first, the Soviet government tried to have the Church surrender its treasures voluntarily. The State ordered meetings of the parishioners to be held the length and breadth of the Soviet Union. These meetings were called in order to decide the question of transferring the treasures to the "Fund for the Aid of the Starving." With very few exceptions, the decisions adopted at these meetings were negative. The reasoning behind the verdict was usually the same: "If the government needs money to buy grain, let us strain every effort to get it in some other way; but the Church's jewels are our sacred heritage." The matter was not decided, however, without arguments and recriminations. Some said: "If we give up the jewels, they will be used for international propaganda rather than for the starving." People generally became suspicious about the government's method of financing international propaganda as a result of forced collections throughout all Soviet organizations and enterprises.

After this unsuccessful appeal to the population, the government published a decree calling for the forcible confiscation of the Church's jewels and immediately set about enforcing it. Throughout the

country, bloody clashes raged between the parishioners who sought to protect the jewels and the police.<sup>1</sup> The clergy were immediately accused of instigating the resistance. Clergymen and members of the Church councils were placed on trial everywhere. Death sentences were all too frequent. The Metropolitan Veniamin, head of the Leningrad Eparchy, was among those executed. Tikhon, the Patriarch, was already in prison and awaiting trial.<sup>2</sup>

Simultaneously, with the confiscation of the Church jewels, the so-called "Living Church" was established, and a new era in the relations between the Church and the State was proclaimed.

Among the clergy there were found, of course, opportunists and unscrupulous clergymen, some of whom were very able men. One of them was Alexander Vvedensky, a talented orator, who considered himself Russia's Luther. Another was Platonov, a priest of the Andreevsky Cathedral in Leningrad. Still other prominent men were involved in the so-called "Reformation" of the Orthodox Church. On the whole, such people were few, but the government backed them and declared them to be the legitimate leaders of the entire Russian Orthodox Church. They were given every assistance, including the right to arrest the populace and the priests who opposed them. *Izvestiya* did not deem it necessary even to hide this. It reported: "The work of purging the ranks of the clergy is even now being accomplished by the authorities of the Church."<sup>3</sup>

Various reprisals on the part of the government, as well as the authorities of the "Living Church," followed. In Saratov, for instance, Bishop Dosphei had been arrested. The Bishop of Volsk, Iov, was immediately summoned to assume his post. He succeeded in rallying the clergy, who remained loyal to the Patriarch, around himself. Soon after, Iov, also was arrested. A few weeks later, the following item appeared in the local newspaper: "Bishop Iov of Volsk, because of his insubordination to the VTsU (Supreme Church Administration), has been exiled to a remote and distant place to do penance."

The resistance of the clergy to the authorities of the "Living

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, "The Trial of the Church Leaders," *Izvestiya*, April 6, 1923, and "Tikhonites on the Kuban," *ibid.*: April 18, 1923.

<sup>2</sup>Tikhon's case was set for April 11, 1923; it was to be tried before the Trial Collegium of the Supreme Court. See: "Trial of the Church Leaders," *Izvestiya*, April 6, 1923.

<sup>3</sup>*Izvestiya*, April 4, 1923, "Against the Tikhonites."

Church" was great, nevertheless. In Kharkov alone, in April, 1923, sixteen priests with their leader, Bishop Pavel, were arrested during the liquidation of the Tikhonites.<sup>4</sup> Similar arrests occurred throughout the country. The clergy remaining loyal to Tikhon was buoyed up by its sense of duty; it also drew moral strength from the conduct of the Orthodox population itself. While the "Living Churches" remained empty, the Tikhonite churches were always jammed with praying and weeping people. In Leningrad, Alexander Vvedensky had already become Metropolitan. After his sermon against the Tikhonites, a stone struck Vvedensky's head as he left the church. The populace tried to free Metropolitan Veniamin from the Cheka guards escorting him to court for trial. On two or three occasions, separate groups of people attempted to chase Nikolai Platonov from the Andreevsky Cathedral.<sup>5</sup> In Saratov, shortly after Bishop Iov Volsky had been exiled to do "penance," a meeting of all the local priests was held in the Cathedral to discuss the union with the "Living Church." Each priest was accompanied by representatives from his own church. The latter exhorted their clergymen not to give in and not to betray the Patriarch.<sup>6</sup> The representatives were not permitted to enter the Cathedral, and waited patiently in the square outside. Soon a vast crowd gathered. Many people became quite violent in their protests. The reformed priests who had initiated the meeting became frightened and called the police. Agents of the Cheka appeared before the Cathedral and dispersed the crowd. Bishop Peter, Iov Volsky's successor in Saratov, was jailed a year later and then he, too, was exiled. A large crowd had somehow learned about his exile and was waiting at the railroad station. The mob rushed the soldiers, who were forced to open fire. The local newspaper said nothing about the shooting, but it did mention "the hysterical women who tried to liberate their idol and brazenly disturbed the peace."

The transfer of the churches from the Tikhonite clergy to the authorities of the "Living Church" provoked many excesses throughout the country. In a special article on the subject, *Izvestiya* admitted that the "Living Church" authorities frequently sent for the

<sup>4</sup>*Izvestiya*, April 18, 1923, "The Tikhonites in the Ukraine."

<sup>5</sup>In the Fall of 1925 Nikolai Platonov became Bishop of the Reformed Church. Still later, during the years of the mass closings of the churches, he became associated with the anti-religious museum set up at the Kazan Cathedral in Leningrad.

<sup>6</sup>The same thing occurred in other cities as well. Special funds were collected by the parishioners of many churches to support the families of priests threatened with arrest.

police to insure the transfer of the churches in the Ukraine.<sup>7</sup> After the arrest of Metropolitan Veniamin, many others were arrested because they had declined to join the "Living Church." At that time, one of the bishops heading the Leningrad diocese was Benedict of Kronstadt.<sup>8</sup> Several priests began to waver and sought his advice. Bishop Benedict was living in daily anticipation of his own arrest. He counseled: "Be close to your flock and you will know what to do."

The populace fiercely resented the "Living Church" and finally forced the government to make certain concessions. Patriarch Tikhon was released from prison. The first services which he conducted at the Donskoi Monastery became a veritable holiday for the Orthodox faith.<sup>9</sup> His appearance helped to consolidate the churches which had remained faithful to him; it also caused most churches which had joined with the "Living Church" to return. All the priests of such churches had to do penance. They fasted and admitted their errors to their congregations. The churches themselves were consecrated once again. These services attracted extremely large crowds. The Soviet government limited itself to the following announcement: "The hostility of Tikhon and his adherents to the "Living Church" is so strong that they consider those churches in which the Reformed Church has held services to be profaned. Hence, when they conduct services in such churches, Tikhon and his colleagues first use holy water to purify them and hold services in them only afterwards."<sup>10</sup>

An underground religious movement developed in the days of the so-called "schism." This movement anticipated that all the Tikhonite churches would be closed. Churches, monasteries, nunneries and other ecclesiastical enterprises were organized in secret. Their purpose was to preserve the true Orthodox religion. Although the situation improved slightly after Patriarch Tikhon's release, no great hopes were entertained. The arrests of bishops, priests, and individual parishioners continued throughout the country. And so it was during 1923 and 1924 that an illegal Orthodox church sprang up; there is evidence to believe that it exists even today.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup>*Izvestiya*, April 18, 1923, "The Tikhonites in the Ukraine."

<sup>8</sup>In 1926 he was sent into exile, and later was executed.

<sup>9</sup>*Izvestiya*, July 3, 1923.

<sup>10</sup>*Izvestiya*, July 13, 1923, "Among the Churchmen."

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, W. Alexeev, "Russian Orthodox Bishops in the Soviet Union,

Between 1924 and 1928, I was in close touch with a Leningrad nunnery through my mother, who was profoundly religious. This society had its own church and many parishioners from the various social strata. It consisted of twelve nuns, headed by a Sister Superior. It maintained an "apartment" on the fourth or fifth floor of a large apartment house. To the outside world this apartment seemed just like all the others in the building. Those who lived there followed many occupations, ranging from scientists to charwomen. The Sister Superior was a writer. Most of them wore ordinary clothes, with the exception of the nurses, who wore uniforms. Each paid for her own lodging and brought her own so-called account book from her place of employment.<sup>12</sup> The group was really a society of nuns. All aspects of life were controlled completely. Most of the nuns, only three of whom had been nuns before the Revolution, had chosen to live in this way when the Church was persecuted. According to the House Manager's records, three occupants lived in the largest room of the apartment, but in reality this room was a small church, which was usually bare, but could be prepared for services in a short time. Services were held irregularly but rather frequently. In addition to the residents of the apartment, some people from the neighborhood also attended the services. There were usually not more than twenty outsiders at a given time, for to have a greater number would have required the special permission of the GPU. All the doors and windows of the room were hung with heavy portieres. The services, including the singing, were whispered.

This society belonged to a nunnery which had several other branches throughout the city. It was headed by a Prioress who lived in a remote place and whose appearances at the church services were not frequent. She was a quiet, spry, elderly lady, with a stern face and a resolute manner. Before the Revolution she had headed a large provincial convent. The Prior of the society's church was also a striking personality, extremely well educated and a fine orator.<sup>13</sup> Some of the nuns and novices were very young; frequently they had defied their parents to enter upon a life of asceticism.

1941-1953," Research Program on the U.S.S.R., N.Y., 1954, mimeographed series' No. 61, pp. 58-62. This study is based on the material from the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*.

<sup>12</sup>The rent was assessed in proportion to the earnings of each individual occupant. The account books showed the salaries.

<sup>13</sup>The Prioress, as well as the Prior, of this Society's church died a natural death in the early 1930's.

The general life and mood of the society and among its lay associates differed radically from the life around them. The leaders of the society were completely non-political. In the four years of my association with it, I never heard a single sharp word against the government. The latter was regarded as a blind force which threatened the existence of the Orthodox religion. The aim of the society was to preserve centers of Orthodoxy, no matter how difficult the conditions. Everything was subordinated to that end. The measures adopted by the Prioress during these years revealed both her prescience and her flexibility. She possessed great faith in the work and great wisdom.

Services were sometimes conducted in the Society's church by regular officials of the church hierarchy. However, the existence of these secret religious organizations was sometimes concealed even from some of the clergy. There was, in fact, a difference in attitude toward this secret church among the higher clergy which was loyal to Patriarch Tikhon. Thus the post-World War Two head of the Orthodox Church in the U.S.S.R., Patriarch Aleksey, was then in Leningrad as the Bishop of Kingissep (Yamburg); he was, in general, not in favor of the underground church. An excellent orator, he became a great leader of the Church during the schism, at which time he gained a great number of adherents. During the worst days of the "pro-reformation" pressure, he refused to yield and was banished.<sup>14</sup> Even then, among his closest associates, he said: "If we wish to save any vestiges of the Orthodox church, we must make concessions to the State; otherwise all will be lost." Nor did he change this point of view in succeeding years. Immediately upon his return to Leningrad from exile, he conducted services in a small church connected with a secret organization. According to the clergy of this church, the Bishop was severe and not very gracious. Upon entering the church, he issued a stern reprimand because the bell had stopped tolling too soon. He said: "You have already forgotten how to greet a Bishop of the Orthodox church." After the service, he refused to partake of the meal which had been prepared for him and left immediately.

The authorities gradually learned that illegal church organizations, similar to the one I described, existed also in Moscow and the provinces. Apparently the government suspected their existence as early as 1923, when it announced the "battle against the Ti-

<sup>14</sup>This fact was not mentioned in his biography, published by the Moscow newspapers during World War II.

khonites.<sup>15</sup> A number of the secret religious organizations organized in 1923 ceased to exist during the thirties. However, a new group of secret organizations was established after the government had closed most of the churches. In form, these later organizations were even more flexible than the earlier ones.<sup>16</sup>

Once, after a meal offered to the guests following a service at the Leningrad Society which I used to frequent, the Prioress read an article which she had written about the fate of the Russian monasteries and convents. In conclusion, she voiced her firm conviction that the Orthodox church and clergy would survive, not in the thick and sweet-smelling forests, but in the dusty and noisy city streets. And, she felt, as always on Russian soil, lay people would go to the priests and bare their hearts in the confessional. Shortly before World War II, I learned that several members of this secret society had spent several years in a northern concentration camp but that, upon their release, they continued their work. I distinctly heard the Prioress' familiar voice saying with warm assurance: "The Orthodox faith will never die on Russian soil."

<sup>15</sup>*Izvestiya*, April 18, 1923, "The Tikhonites and the Ukraine."

<sup>16</sup>In 1933, for example, I was married in an illegal church. The priest asked only my future wife's name and my own. We were required to take an oath that, in the event of divorce, we should request permission for such a step from the nearest duly-constituted bishop of the Orthodox church.

# With the Y.M.C.A. in Revolutionary Russia\*

BY ETHAN T. COLTON, SR.

GETTING from New York across the frontier of Soviet Russia took long frustrating winter weeks of 1917-1918.

Less than three months had elapsed since the Communists seized power in Russia from the moderate democratic regime of six months that followed the Tsar's abdication. Lurid stories came out daily of the mounting terror and death attending the Bolshevik snuffing out of resistance wherever it showed up or was suspected. Truth and imagination mingled in the tales.

We ruled out irresponsible tramp ships carrying contraband that offered the only possible Baltic passage. The shooting civil war blocked off direct land travel across Finland. That government, so lately freed from Russian rule, fought to defeat its own Communists' thrust for power, backed up by Soviet auxiliaries. An active battle line swayed between Helsingfors and Petrograd, our destination. The front, stretching East-West across the entire country, left no chance for an end run around it. A further complication existed in the presence of plentiful civil and uniformed Germans openly negotiating with the government about German military aid against the Red Finns and the Soviet Power itself. The great war was in the last fateful year of its course, with a German-Russian peace in the balance at Brest-Litovsk. Entrance into Russia of an important American service mission like ours would distinctly not be in the German interest. When later we got to Torneo, we ate dinner one night in the same hotel dining room with a group of the enemy agents. At a late hour the proprietor had to persuade a few of them, in liquor, from attacking our quarters. They would have met some of my awakened party standing inside with drawn revolvers.

To avert the lid blowing off, a committee of Y.M.C.A. workers in Moscow decided to have one of their number undertake to get through to Stockholm. The objectives were to try out travel possibilities, report on the actual internal conditions of life, and

\*These are excerpts from the author's unpublished memoirs [Ed.].

above all, on the imperative need for me to get on the administrative scene in person. They entrusted the mission to wise, determined, practical Russell M. Story, then a Syracuse University professor, later Pomona College president. I doubt whether, apart from his advent and representations, I would have made the get-away and entry. He made his way around or through the military lines in Finland with the aid of friendly under-officers. The Finnish government, however, balked at countenancing the attempt of a party to repeat it. German objectives probably figured in the impasse. Only one thwarting of defeat remained: win consent of that government to let us proceed across its territory enough short of the front for security. Then on our own we would strike out 300 kilometers east by sleds to Petrozavodsk and continue on the Russian Murmansk-Petrograd railroad.

The Soviet visa came with little delay. Our Minister, Ira Nelson Morris, showed gracious solicitude, had us for Christmas dinner in the palatial home built for the Russian Grand Duchess Marie by her father when she married the Crown Prince of Sweden. He did everything "regular" to further our advance, yet would not ask the Finnish government for consent and cooperation in the proposed trek out of that country into Soviet Russia. That would involve the United States Government in responsibility if some untoward eventuality arose.

Finally, Story addressed himself directly to the Finnish authorities who were concerned fully as much with having good relations with America as with Germany. They consented to have us come to Torneo at the extreme north end of the gulf of Bothnia and to wait there for military conduct to Sortavala on Lake Ladoga. Travel from there on would be our private concern. Mr. Morris could have intervened to block the deal, but did not. He warned us at length about the risks, and required our written statement in which we absolved the Legation and our government from all responsibility in the undertaking, of which he did not take official cognizance. Privately he commended me to our Ambassador Francis in Moscow by what he said would be the best possible introduction — a large bottle of Scotch whiskey that I managed to deliver intact to the aged ex-Governor of Missouri.

It took four days in Torneo to get the green light. This had to come from the redoubtable Mannerheim, Commander in Chief, for three of us to go forward, as it entailed a military guard. Story, myself, and my secretary, Stanley Fellowes, as an indispensable, made

up the trio. All save one of my top associates, who had accompanied me thus far from London, had to double back across Sweden and Norway to detour by sea via the North Cape and Murmansk, then by rail to Moscow. They made up a greatly needed combination — Bryant R. Ryall, rural field specialist, and John C. Traphagen for financial control, with three very capable assistants. Fortunate breaks in the re-routing enabled them to get to Russia in time to take their places in the reorganization of personnel and program. The finance unit preserved my sanity and the Y.M.C.A.'s credit. We had back of us, among other resources, \$1,000,000 given for human welfare work in Russia by President Wilson out of the considerable optional fund voted him by Congress. And we took over from an executive limited to making a suitcase under his bed the depository for the rubles supply. Traphagen came to us from the position of cashier in a minor New York bank. He rose rapidly after the war through a succession of changes to presidency of the Bank of New York.

Doing the 300 odd miles to Sortavala used up two days and nights spent in clean second class coaches. While there, along with reporting to the police and finding quarters and food, we engaged transportation, jointly with the French Consul general en route to Moscow and a courier of the British government, for a sleigh ride of 200 kilometers to Petrozavodsk. Our mentor there was a respected young layman in the local Young Men's Christian Association. I am certain we never knew how much we owed to his influence for the uniformly smooth going we had with the authorities and people almost within the sound of guns in a bitter civil war. Fair bargaining enlisted four drivers, their single horses and sleds for the long drive. The journey lasted from sundown on a Wednesday over the lake until 3:00 a.m. the following Sunday. Weather was clear sub-Arctic all the way in dry zero temperatures.

The stretches in motion ran four or five hours, then halted for the horses to feed and rest. The tough little animals made it all the way without relay and were due to go back on like schedule. We passengers took to bedless sleep by snatches in a town or peasant home, once in a schoolroom. The northern lights flaming across the sky made the nights unforgettable. Much of the route lay through deep forests, every stump and elbowed limb crowned with a snow cap a foot high. We ate chiefly near-frozen rations, which we brought along, washed down with tea brewed on the spot with hot water from the ever present family samovar of the peasant families.

We got on well as a company with mutual respect and consideration shown all the way, until the elderly, dignified Consul General gave us a shock at destination. He had told us a French military train would be waiting there to pick him up for Petrograd. His lumbago had won him the one bed met with on the whole trip. He couldn't stomach ham, so got the chicken. We drove directly to the train expecting the whole entourage would be taken aboard. He betook himself to a Wagon Lits and, without a word, passed the porter and shut the door in our faces.

We four deserted, dog-tired companions bribed our way with cigarettes into the freight car quarters of the train's Russian Red Guard. The British courier, a grand sport who really managed our expedition, said the let-down afforded us exhibition of a national trait. I have never had enough contact with the French character to prove or disprove the charge or to quite remove the impression left by the incident. In any case, the smoke-filled soldiers' *teplushka* (box car) bumped us in a day and night into Petrograd, attempting to sleep on our duffle bags.

I stayed there only long enough to get travel permissions and train space to Moscow. It was time wasted securing the latter facility. Four armed home-bound veterans joined my secretary, Fellowes, and me in our compartment. That was "the rule of the road" at that time. Other ticket holders fared no better. Sleeping men and women made passage in the aisles and corridors a struggle with main force. The desperate clung to the platform and left-overs took to the roofs. Our headquarters, like the Soviet government, had moved to Moscow to get farther from the German Baltic army, for Petrograd could be taken in a day with little more than skirmishing. We had commodious housing in the former Turkish Embassy on Smolensky Boulevard for both personnel and office facilities. Scouting for food kept more than one resourceful man busy, and we needed an armed guard at night to keep what he managed to find. The National Y.W.C.A. unit of American women shared the headquarters. A stout-hearted, cultured, able group, they contributed to a social atmosphere priceless in the situation.

Big events were afoot when I arrived in Moscow. Almost my first night I sat in on a session of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Lenin addressed it in support of signing the drastic peace the Germans had just dictated at Brest-Litovsk. A picturesque assortment of several hundred workmen, peasants, soldiers and intellectuals made up the assemblage in the Hall of Nobles. Not more than a

handful, even of those who were Communist Party members, would be capable of an independent decision. Uniformed men with fixed bayonets stood in the hallways and around the main periphery. The tension matched the momentous question. A proletarian figure arose in front of our seats while Chicherin, Foreign Commissar, was speaking in very poor voice. The Chairman asked, "What does the Comrade want?" He replied, "To hear. How can we vote right if we do not understand what this matter is about? If this speaker cannot do better, let someone try whom we can hear." Chicherin droned on to the end of his pages.

Then Lenin. I remember vividly the short, erect, sturdy figure with legs apart, posturing a personality sure, unafraid, and resolute. He argued for the signing in order to apply what strength could be mustered to overcoming the class enemies at home, since resistance to the Germans had collapsed beyond renewal. The comrades always followed Lenin's lead, and here, by upraised hands gave the solid vote for signing the abject terms of peace. I did not see that most fateful man of his generation again alive. Twice though, years apart, I joined the line at his tomb in Red Square by the Kremlin wall to go down to the crypt where the body rests under glass, startlingly preserved by embalming, the thinly-bearded face without pallor or decay.

The prime necessity was to establish morale in the restless, distraught aggregation of Y.M.C.A. personnel. To this end I called them all in for conference from the four quarters of European Russia. The gathering place was Samara on the Volga, at the point of the Trans-Siberian railroad crossing. Decision had been taken already to move Headquarters there in order to be farther still from the German front. Even after the Soviet-German peace was signed, it moved deeper daily into the Ukraine.

Although the United States Government had not given formal recognition to the Moscow regime, its officers, who had been accredited to the Provisional Government that took over from the Tsar, remained on the ground in tentative functional relations. We had constant, cordial, and mutually helpful contacts with them. Our aged Ambassador rather groped his way in the Bolshevik revolutionary dust for a course to pursue. He sat aloof with other Ambassadors in Vologda 250 miles north of the Soviet capital. Younger men carried on with clear heads, notably Dewit C. Poole and Norman Armour. In a sense the Y.M.C.A. had gotten further into gear with the new order than had our diplomatic representatives.

This occurred because of our having received Soviet confirmation of our charter of working permits and concessions granted by the Kerensky government.

There were seventy-three secretaries in our staff in different parts of European and Asiatic Russia, when I called together at Samara as many as could get there. Distance prevented those in Vladivostok, 6,000 miles away on the Pacific coast. Several wished to get to the United States to join the army. Others wanted to go direct to France. Some, longest in Russia, believed they could render better national service by staying there as American representatives in some helpful capacity. I had cables from New York urging all of them to remain in Russia on the strength of President Wilson's personal approval given to Mott and of arrangements within the War Department for clearance with their local draft boards. The stated grounds were "to help in friendly Association work for men of all parties and classes, in every possible way demonstrating unselfish interest of America in the Russian people."

After wide open expression of opinion without pressure, each man freely stated his decision. Eleven felt that they must leave Russia to make themselves available for military service. Health or other personal considerations constrained six to leave for home. The remaining fifty-six stated preferences for various types of service with people in Russia. Deferring to these as far as possible, I made the assignments to varied fields, seven to be engaged in relief service to the hapless returning Russian prisoners of war from Central Europe; the highly competent Traphagen foursome to financial administration; three to conduct a civilian program in Moscow, others similarly to Samara, Kazan, Nizhni-Novgorod, Petrograd, Murmansk, and Archangel. Three already had in operation a service of distinction in Vladivostok. Six stout-hearted men volunteered to share with the Czechoslovak Legionnaires whatever fate might be in store for them. Two began convoy of a trainload of stranded Serbian women, children and old men across Siberia to port. One attached himself as Red Triangle representative to a unit of Serb soldiers en route via the Arctic to France. The depleted American consular staff absorbed six. A rural-minded unit manned a well-equipped boat exhibit for a highly successful educational cruise to towns along the Volga. Large new staff additions came by the Pacific to man the rapidly mounting operations across Siberia. Japan and China missions furnished numerous recruits.

All that took place in me spiritually cannot be reduced to lan-

guage. Here came exposure to a fourth of the continent; to a great Slav people with strange folkways; to the largest Eastern church with its highly ritualistic worship at the other pole from my simple Methodist upbringing, yet mystically appealing; and, further, to heaving foundations bringing down the whole political, economic, and social order. One probably has to be tossed around in such a thoroughgoing ideological earthquake to more than suspect the re-thinking it induces.

I soon recognized "mellowing" as one conscious effect on me. Son Ted puts it as having "made me easier to live with." I learned compassion for people in plights not of their own making and from which they could not escape. I learned further to cushion their weaknesses and mistakes with more understanding.

The Communists had seized the March, 1917, Russian Revolution from the moderate forces that brought about overthrow of the autocratic regime to the rejoicing of all Americans. From October of the same year, when they thrust their party and themselves to power, the Lenin-Trotsky dictatorship had been forcing Russian life into the Bolshevik mold. Perforce we tried to work with it in its first stage of naivete. For instance, the proletariat had a try at the controls promised them in the Bolshevik pre-revolutionary propaganda. They gave effect to such ringing slogans as "the factories to the workers," and "All Power to the Soviets of Workers, Peasants, and Soldiers."

That language had yeast in it. Workmen in industrial plants set up shop committees that dispossessed owners and management, took over operations, and brought production down in ruin. This folly extended to the janitors and scrub-women taking over in the Moscow First University. There they registered peasants in the medical courses who could neither read nor write. I put up in the only creditable hotel in Samara. The Soviet of cooks and waiters ran it. I got in past a long list of patient waiting applicants by moving into the room of a National City Bank man who tipped me off that he was vacating. He had "registered" that way, and a colleague succeeded me by the same artifice. My only connection with the management was paying the weekly bills left in the room.

It will be seen that the rigid controls and iron discipline later enforced had not then been applied. We had free contact practically with individuals, families, and under-officials. A private car granted me would be attached to nearly any passenger train on reasonable advance notice. Passes when required, and this often,

came usually for the asking. One of our men traveled half way across Russia by holding up to the guards a big red seal clipped from an American Express parcel.

A station guard one day declared a truth to one of our most conservative bachelors strict in the observance of all amenities. (It had wide application there at the time.) He had ridden all night in a box car packed to standing room only with travelers. Nature was pressing urgently for expression in a *ubornaya* (Russian for W.C.). He had elbowed his way to a door to drop off the moment of a stop. He jumped almost into the person of a soldier on duty, and whispered in his best Russian, "*Tovarishch, gde ubornaya?*" (Comrade, where is the toilet?) The answer came with a sweep of the arm around the horizon, "Comrade, all the world is a *ubornaya*."

The agonies, though, greatly outnumbered the smiles. In Samara, the newly installed Commissar for all institutions caring for the sick, blind, deaf, insane, poor, and other public charges outside of prisons, had no single qualifications for the position except a kind heart. Things collapsed on her helpless hands. One day, baffled and despairing, she beat her breast and cried, "Oh, you Americans, how happy you ought to be. You are free. You know how to be free. We want to be free and we can't." We financed there a maternity home, the only one, I think, in Y.M.C.A. history. It took care of cases off the floor of the big railway station, and in the families living in box cars out in the freight yards, many of the children barefoot and wearing a single garment. It was late winter.

Professional people, competent in their fields, but without authority, placed unwarranted confidence in the "American Mission" as we were styled. They saw we had funds and permissions and got something done. A request impossible to meet came from two doctors, ordered to a town down the Volga where cholera had appeared. They said their going alone would be futile. Would not one of us go along to stand in between them and some ignorant officious commissar who would order them about on how to avert an epidemic.

No day passed without some staff man bringing in an account that would wring the heart. I got one first hand on a day in Vologda, in company there with a British associate. He knew the language from several years' residence in Russia, and liked talking with the muzhik type of simple folk. He and I came upon an old man begging on the street. Dukes gave him a highly inflated ruble and got his story. The dialogue that follows bared one case among a million of small

landowners who suffered dispossession by the nationalizing of their private holdings. This one had the nth degree of poignancy:

"What is the matter, grandfather? Can't you see?"

"No, little son; I am blind."

"How did it happen?"

"Oh, I don't know. My eyes got sick and it went dark."

"Where do you live?"

He named the town.

"How far away is that?"

"Twenty miles."

"What are you here for today?"

"I came down to worship." It was one of the feast days of the Church.

"How did you get here?"

"My son led me down."

"Your son? Does he work?"

"No, he cannot work; he is nearly blind, too. It is getting dark with him as it is with me." Another case of cataract or trachoma.

"How do you live?"

"Well," the old man said, cheerfully, "I get my bread by walking about the world." That is magnificent language. It means begging in Russia.

"Where do you sleep?"

"Well, I had a little piece of land that I rented for thirty rubles. I used those thirty rubles to buy wood, and a neighbor, a distant relative, would take my wood and because that heated his house, he let me sleep in the corner of one of his rooms."

"Haven't you the land now?"

"No."

"Where is it?"

"They took it."

"Who took it?"

"They did."

"Who are they?"

"Well, they called us all in at the village one day and said, 'We have a new law in Russia. No one can live on land any more, or have any rental from it, or profit in any way, who does not work it with his own hands.'"

Now here is a piece of Russian logic. They are incapable of hypocrisy, the Russians. They do not entertain one set of theories and work some other principles. They cut right through a proposition to the bone, and then cut the bone.

"They said, 'Old man, do you work that land?' And I answered, 'Look at these blind eyes and my gray hairs. How can I work a farm?' 'Very well,' they said. 'You are a landlord. You cannot have rent from that land any more. We are going to take it and give it to somebody who will work it.'"

The old man was not complaining; that is the reason I tell his story. He was not bitter at anybody; he was puzzled, and turned to the friendly foreigner with: "You are an educated person. Perhaps you can explain this to me."

In him you see a suffering Russia — a window into millions of souls. How shall those of us who have seen ever forget the gaze, or cease to be moved, by remembrance, of those friendly, wistful, uncomprehending eyes?

Thus we dealt with a population in the operating room of a sociological clinic for major surgery in the whole range of national life. More than a spectator, I had to direct the work of the largest most widely spread American civilian organization in that vast country. It then embraced a sixth of the earth's land surface. As chief executive, I had to locate the government's political and economic gears and mesh our Y.M.C.A. wheels into them. Beyond that, lay the ministry to human need *in extremis*, body and soul. Their ordeal revealed character at its best and worst. Their qualities established a claim on me for administrative and personal service that I could never shirk.

Certain personal risks and hardships attended, to be sure. The situation inside presented assorted risks, irresponsible and otherwise. The boyish guards on that military train to Petrograd toyed with their guns with hair-raising impunity, to the point, even, of opening live ammunition and of target practise inside the car. All spring and summer desultory gunfire punctuated the nights in all the cities. Two revengeful Russians assassinated the German Ambassador in daylight just over the wall from our Smolensky Boulevard place in Moscow.

I came in line of fire but once. When the government cracked down on the considerable Anarchist concentrations in the large cities, the remnants scattered to other parts. A score or more came to Samara. They forced the proletarian hotel management to throw out other guests to make room for themselves. After a noisy night one floor up from mine, I started up to look around a bit, but stopped at a machine gun pointed down the stairway. That day the band seized a truck and took over rule of the city by cruising the streets

and sweeping them with fusillades to keep knots of people from gathering. The state of affairs lasted a day. A Red Guard unit came in from outside and restored the precarious order by a wholesale arrest. I last saw the prisoners being put aboard a boat that as a matter of course would take them to the higher authorities for execution.

On taking power the Communists set up the "All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution, Speculation and Sabotage;" "Cheka" for short, and fondly styled by them "Sword of the Revolution." Night searches of homes by its armed agents came often enough to keep dispelled any real sense of security. For maximum effect on people's nerves, these came usually at hours after midnight, announced by the loud banging of rifle butts on the door. For us Americans, the inspection would be routine, rarely going beyond a look at our passports and other identifying documents. Russians and their homes came in for thorough frisking for weapons, jewelry, and other bourgeois valuables. The housefrau in our Vologda place got to my room before the soldiers to put for safety a box of family treasures in the pail of used wash water.

I suppose I invited "the extreme penalty" once by taking custody of the State Department code book when the Ambassador vacated Vologda for Archangel in order to come under the protection of incoming American troops. At a train half way to Moscow a rap sounded on the door of my compartment. And the instant thought, "This is it." Fancy the relief when friendly Armour and Poole of the Embassy and Consulate came in to take the book, and spend the rest of the night burning it leaf by leaf.

Only one arrest overtook me. A "big wind" was blowing up. The Allies had decided on intervention against the Soviet regime by coming in with forces through Arctic ports and Pacific Vladivostock to join up with the Czechoslovak Legionnaires who already held the railroad from the Urals all the way across Siberia. The Soviet authorities recognized our Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. personnel as having diplomatic immunity and so privileged to have peaceful exit from the country. We asked for permission to take the eastern route, and to that end gathered our staffs in Nizhni-Novgorod, not then far from the Czechoslovak's western line. We sat there several weeks awaiting developments. I lived with my immediate aides in a second class rail coach on a sliding. A German deputation operated in the yards at the same time, moving train loads of war prisoners of their nationality out for Fatherland repatriation. It may have

been suggested to the Russians that the company of Americans in the city would bear looking into for security reasons. Anyway, the police picked up all of us who were on hand at suppertime for transport to headquarters. We received respectful handling far into the night. Our papers satisfied the chief, when he got around to inspect them, that we presented no danger to the state. He released us with some evidence of displeasure over our arrest.

It took foresight and skill to get enough to eat to keep strength up to pitch. Butter and sugar ran out. Tea never did, nor the saccharine to sweeten it. We lived best in Samara with good bread, cheese, and honey in plenty. The menu shrank and shaded off every mile to the north until Arctic Archangel's larder neared the state of Old Mother Hubbard's cupboard. There were bones now and then of a wild bird with shreds of black, tough, and bitter meat on them. At that meal I had the feel of eating crow. One became ashamed realizing the amount of time his mind dwelt on victuals. And the vision of what would be good went back to boyhood eating rather than to the International Committee's annual dinners at the Waldorf Astoria. That I came home more than thirty pounds underweight speaks for the food I could have done with.

The military intervention that brought about our exit threw the Kremlin into panic at first. At least one high official believed it would end Soviet rule, "but," he said, "we will slam the door in their faces" — a threat harking back perhaps to the burning of Moscow and ruin of "La Grande Armée." But the Allied troop movement into European Russia amounted only to a feeble gesture, successfully resisted. It was a "foreign invasion" that actually strengthened the Soviet government's position.

It served of course to make the continuing presence of Americans in the country impossible for any purpose, whether benevolent or otherwise. We were let out westward rather than the first proposed Siberian way. We had safe conduct to the Russian border town of Belyi Ostrov along with the American Embassy, Consular and Committee of Information (Propaganda) personnel. The day we rode from Moscow to Petrograd, a Left Socialist-Revolutionary young woman shot Lenin, and that night Uritsky, Leningrad's top Commissar, was assassinated. The two events stalled us there for twenty-four critical hours in the railroad station. I have always thought a liberal use of money broke the jam and suspense. The train, anyway, moved up the few miles to the small frontier town and we crossed over, to the entire party's relief.

# American Relief in the Russian Famine of 1891-1892

BY GEORGE S. QUEEN

FOR over two decades the Russian famine of 1891 had been impending. Merciless taxation, an emphasis on heavy exports of grain, and overpopulation, all imposed upon a primitive system of agriculture, had prepared the way. The peasant's consumption of grain had dropped from nineteen *poods* per capita in the seventies to sixteen *poods* at the end of the eighties. Yet the former figure had been considered the absolute minimum for peasant health.<sup>1</sup>

Charlton H. Way, the American Consul-General at St. Petersburg, predicted the disaster two years before it came. The Russian peasant was poverty stricken, Way reported to Washington, because he had ". . . so many difficulties to contend with . . . that it was a wonder that he remained . . . a proprietor in any sense of the word." His redemption dues, and his taxes to both the Imperial and local governments became more burdensome year by year. In order to pay these taxes — and his debts and his liquor bill — the *mujik* rushed his grain to the autumn market, which became glutted; and in the end the middleman got the grain at twenty-five per cent below its market value. Generally, by December the peasant's food stock was gone, and from that time to the next harvest he was dependent upon the local landlord and the local moneylender for food, clothing, machinery, and even the seed for the next year's crop. In fact, it was estimated by the Imperial government itself that the Russian cultivator suffered an annual loss of from one to ten rubles per 2.7 acres on all grain crops except wheat.

Could such conditions continue, the Consul-General asked, except with ruin to the agricultural class? Sooner or later Russia would have to remedy this social evil. Mr. Way continued:

At present the statesmen of Russia legislate for towns and cities principally. They seem oblivious of the millions of peasants on the brink of ruin; but some day there will be a rude awakening, and Tsar, Senate, Council, and Ministries will realize that the most industrious and loyal inhabitants of the Empire are

<sup>1</sup>Margaret S. Miller, *The Economic Development of Russia, 1905-1914*, London, 1926, p. 49.

no longer on the brink, but have absolutely fallen upon the charities of the country. It is no picture painted for pastime. I simply write facts that are known to every man in Russia.<sup>2</sup>

When the crops of 1889, 1890, and 1891 were fifteen, five and twenty-six per cent, respectively, below normal,<sup>3</sup> the debacle occurred which Way had foreseen. One of the worst famines in history ravaged central European Russia for over a year. Before it ended, the Tsarist government had become aroused to the need for agricultural reforms. And the American people had demonstrated their spirit of philanthropy and their friendship toward the people of Russia.

On August 11, 1891, the *New York Times* noted the failure of the crops in Russia. Casually, the editor pointed out that the news would be of interest to American grain dealers and farmers. He speculated also on the possible political repercussions inside the Empire, which might become serious, considering the demands that were "already being made upon the Russian government to prohibit the exportation of grain." Two days later the *Times* reported the issuance of the expected ukase, but the editor suspected it was done as a "blow at Germany and Austria." On August 17 the editor reverted to the idea that American farmers would benefit from the crop failure, since Russia was "our principal competitor in the grain markets of the world." The editor admitted on September 7 that the outlook in Russia was "terrible indeed." But again on September 14, he seemed to see only an "opening for our corn" [maize].

A special article appeared in the *Times* on September 6, 1891, entitled "Russia's War on the Jews." The shortage of crops was aggravated, the correspondent said, by the persecution of the Jews. Jewish merchants, he claimed, customarily went about the countryside buying the growing crops, advancing money for the expenses of the harvest: "most landowners live on next year's money." But in 1891, the Jews in Russia were trying to turn their property into cash in order to secrete it or to leave the country. As a consequence, much grain was left standing in the field; a fact to which the correspondent could personally attest, he said.

Perhaps the reporter had traveled to Rostov, for "only territory adjacent" to that city had a crop, according to the agent of the McCormick Harvester Company. The agent complained to the home office of his difficulties in selling binders, because "of the

<sup>2</sup>*Consular Report* 106, Washington, 1889, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup>John M. Crawford, ed., *Industries of Russia*, London, 1893, III, p. 99.

crowds of laborers who poured in from the famine areas in the North," and worked for their board. In the North, he wrote, the binder trade was "completely dead" in 1891. There was nothing to harvest.<sup>4</sup>

By November 22, the *New York Times* recognized the gravity of the situation in Russia, and it assailed the Russian system of society with characteristic antipathy:

Famine always prevails in Russia to a greater or less extent. Sometimes its ravages are confined to single provinces; then it is known as the *golodovka*, or the little famine, which is never absent from some part of the Empire. At other times it is national in its magnitude; then it is known as the *golod*, or the great hunger, sweeping over a vast region. . . . The present famine belongs to the *golod* variety, of which there have been eight visitations since the beginning of the century, and exceeds in extent and horror any predecessor of the last three hundred years. [The editor goes on to depict luridly the misery of the people. Then he asks what steps have been taken against it.] The answer involves a disclosure characteristically Russian. When the famine was foretold a year ago by the Minister of Finance, the Clergy were the first to move against it—not with food and money, but with all the prayers prescribed in the official liturgy for such an occasion.

In the same critical vein, the *Times* editor remarked nearly a month later that it was a "melancholy illustration of the isolation of Russia from the civilized world that no effectual steps have been taken in other countries to relieve [the] suffering . . . If the same thing had happened in any other European country, extensive measures of relief would before this have been taken. That they have not been taken is one of the penalties Russia pays for her barbarism."

That the Tsarist government and its people were not quite so barbaric as the ethnocentric editor of the *Times* claimed, is shown by the dispatches of Charles Emory Smith, the American Minister at St. Petersburg. Smith had in the meantime communicated some details of the famine to Washington. The region affected lay south and east of Moscow in the very heart of Russia. It stretched 500 miles north to south along the Volga, and perhaps an equal distance east to west. Of the more than 20,000,000 people in the stricken area, it was estimated that 13,728,000 would require assistance through the winter and until after the harvest of 1892. The cost of food and funds for public works would amount to \$25,000,000, according to some estimates, to two or three times that amount according to others.

<sup>4</sup>George Freudenreich to McCormick Harvester Company, October 7, 19, 21, 1891. McCormick Company Manuscripts, Chicago.

The Imperial Government, Smith continued, and all classes of society were contributing liberally to meet the emergency. The Government had loaned the grain for the fall seeding, which had been difficult because of the continuing drouth. Organized bodies under the control of the Zemstvo governments had been created to administer relief in the famine districts.<sup>5</sup> At St. Petersburg a special committee had been established to supervise the whole relief program. At its head was the Tsarevitch, assisted by other Russians of note, such as Privy Councillors, the Ministers of Domains and of the Interior, and railway experts such as the celebrated General Annenkov, builder of the Trans-Caucasus Railway.<sup>6</sup>

The Editor of the *Times* was also somewhat in error as to an absence of humanitarian efforts in Russia's behalf. In reply to Minister Smith, Secretary of State James G. Blaine announced that organized efforts had been initiated in the American Middle West aimed at the collection of grain and money to be sent to the victims of the famine. This humanitarian movement, inspired and publicized by W. C. Edgar, editor of the *Northwestern Miller*, a journal of the milling industry, apparently aroused considerable interest in the United States. At any rate, the files of the American St. Petersburg Legation called "Miscellaneous Received" contain some curious correspondence on the subject of the famine of 1891.

When, some weeks earlier, the editor W. C. Edgar had conceived the idea of sending a cargo of flour to the famine sufferers, he first inquired of the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Washington as to the Imperial Government's probable reaction. The Chargé cabled St. Petersburg and soon informed Edgar that the American donation would be gratefully received, and that his government would pay the freight charges both to the seaboard and across the ocean — a cash outlay estimated at fifty thousand dollars. Immediately, Mr. Edgar opened subscription lists in Minneapolis. So well was his appeal answered locally that he decided to make it statewide and, later, nationwide through the columns of his journal. The governor of Minnesota, W. R. Merriam, then got behind the movement and appointed a state committee, headed by Mr. Edgar, with subcommittees in every county. The idea quickly spread to many other parts of the nation, and soon money as well as food was being solicited and collected.

<sup>5</sup>*Foreign Relations*, 1891, pp. 746-747. In an article in the *North American Review* for May, 1892, the Minister sets forth the acts of the government in relief of the famine.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 1892, p. 362.

Shortly, however, rumors began to circulate in the United States that the reports of the distress in Russia were much exaggerated. Governor Merriam, apparently unaware of Edgar's earlier inquiries at the Russian Legation in Washington, cabled directly to Minister Smith in St. Petersburg. He requested full information as to the extent of the famine and the disposition of the Russian government toward American contributions in relief. Smith assured the Governor that conditions along the Volga were indeed very serious. As to the attitude of the Imperial Government toward American aid, he submitted the inquiry to de Giers, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who expressed his warm appreciation, but who wished to consult with the Minister of the Interior before replying. While awaiting de Giers' reply, Smith read in the newspapers that Congress had authorized the Secretary of the Navy to place a ship at the disposal of the donors of the proposed cargo of foodstuffs. Informing de Giers of this action in a note, the American Minister soon received an acceptance of the American offer.

However, the news report proved false, having been based, apparently, upon Senate Resolution 21, which authorized the Secretary of the Navy "to transport contributions for the relief of the suffering poor of Russia."<sup>7</sup> The House had yet to act upon the resolution. It came before that economy-minded body on January 6, 1892, and in the light of the long debate which followed, it is difficult to believe that the quality of our Congressional representatives has deteriorated over the years.

Kilgore of Texas detected in the proposal a "Navy junket" for the members of the Naval Affairs Committee and the Admirals and he moved, and won, reference to the Appropriations Committee. Next, the legality of the contemplated action was questioned; then it was shown that the Navy had been authorized to charter ships to succor Ireland in 1847, and again in 1880, and that Congress had provided the funds then, as it was asked to do now, in 1892, for Russia.

But, demanded a solon, did Congress have the power to appropriate funds for such purposes? Had it not refused some years ago to vote aid for the people of the drouth-stricken areas of Texas? And for the people of the great state of Nebraska in 1890, chimed in William Jennings Bryan. To this argument it was replied that the United States could extend aid to Russia, a foreign power, under the "foreign commerce clause."

<sup>7</sup>*Congressional Record*, 52 Congress, 1 Session, XXIII, Part 1, p. 157.

Now the honorable members began to examine Russian policies, both foreign and domestic. At length, coming to the matter of the famine, Russia's good faith was questioned. Why, it was asked, did not Russia help her own people from the hoards of gold which she was reputed to keep abroad? Was she not saving it for waging war?

Finally, the resolution was taken up in the Committee of the Whole and the debate seemed to be petering out, when an amendment was offered which provided that any relief dispatched should be distributed fairly among the sufferers without regard to race or creed. This touched off a long and emotional review of the burning question of the treatment of the Jews in Russia. This amendment at length being rejected, the honorable gentlemen turned the spotlight of their oratory on the condition of the United States Treasury. The watchdogs of that repository contended that \$100,000 could ill be spared to charter ships to carry grain to Russia. Let the Navy use its own vessels; the expense went on, in use or not. So the provision to appropriate \$100,000 was stricken from the joint resolution. In disgust, the weary proponents of the measure moved to postpone indefinitely, which had the effect of laying on the table.<sup>8</sup>

However carping and unstatesmanlike the attitude of the Congressmen in this debate may seem, they reflected in some measure the suspicion and distrust of the American people. In many of the letters received by Minister Smith in St. Petersburg, this distrust was either implicit or openly expressed. Some of the money collected in the relief drive was sent directly to the American Minister — "because of distrust of Russian officials," wrote Edward E. Hale, who enclosed \$1,587.08 from Roxbury, Massachusetts. Other sums received at the American Legation included £2,000 from the New York Chamber of Commerce; \$1,000 from the Menonites of America; 2,094 marks [ sic ] from the Cedar Falls Russian Relief Fund; and £1,000 from Baltimore.<sup>9</sup> The following passage from one of these letters expresses the American attitude frankly:

We have heard so many stories in this country regarding the dishonesty and rascality of persons in subordinate positions in Russia, that the only way possible to satisfy the contributors to this cargo [of flour] was to promulgate the assurance of the Governor of . . . Minnesota that someone would go in charge of it, . . . who would see that the donation reached the people for whom it was

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 157-177, *passim*. See also *Review of Reviews*, V, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup>St. Petersburg Legation, Miscellaneous Received, January 29, February 10, 24, 26, March 1, 1892. Practically all donations came from the East or the Midwest. Apparently the South still remembered Russia's friendship for the North during the Civil War.

intended. Mr. Edgar and myself . . . have undertaken this mission much against our will, receiving no compensation for our services nor a single dollar for our expenses.<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, however, despite their suspicion of Russian officials, the hearts of thousands of Americans went out to the starving peasants of the Volga — only one letter in the Legation files speaks of apathy, "an apathy so remarkable in Philadelphia." Flour, cornmeal, and money flowed in, "and the desire to aid in the good work seemed to extend to all persons who could in any way furnish assistance". In the case of Mr. Edgar's cargo, and presumably in other instances, the railroad companies proffered free transportation on their lines to Chicago and Buffalo, New York. F. C. Williams, the owner of a large receiving warehouse in Buffalo, volunteered to receive and store consignments to that city where insurance companies donated blanket policies covering the shipments. William James of the New York Central supervised the handling of the shipments in New York City, and also secured the offer of the use of the S S *Missouri* from the Atlantic Transport Company. "Messrs. Hogan and Co., stevedores, offered to load the vessel free." The Berwyn-White Coal Mining Company offered a "sufficient amount of coal . . . And not least among all the kind things done was the offer of the Western Union . . . to frank all messages . . ."<sup>11</sup>

The dispatch of the *Missouri* with its cargo of breadstuffs from the grainfields of the Midwest seemed a spontaneous offering from farmers with plenty to farmers in need. This ship was not, however, the first to reach Russia from America. The *Indiana*, stocked and dispatched in a manner similar to that described above, except that its cargo was largely bought with the contributions of the "apathetic" people of Philadelphia, sailed from that port on February 22, 1892.<sup>12</sup> The ship docked at Libau on March 16, and was met by the American consul-general and members of the Imperial Relief Committee. Amid flying flags and the stirring music of "Hail Columbia," "God Save the Tsar," and "The Star-Spangled Banner," the gifts of food were unloaded, placed upon waiting trains, and rushed to the famine districts, where distribution was largely under the direction of the British-American Church of St. Petersburg.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup>C. McC. Reeve to Smith, *ibid.*, February 11, 1892.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup>*Foreign Relations*, 1892, p. 369.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 374-376.

"The general feeling expressed," wrote an English observer to Minister Smith,

. . . is one of great friendliness and is characterized by its absolute faith in the singleness of purpose which prompted the heart of America to express its sympathy with the suffering and distressed in this country. I bear this testimony no less willingly and readily because as an Englishman I know that not all help sent has been received in this spirit.<sup>14</sup>

The *Indiana* was the tangible symbol of the good will of the American people toward the Russian people. It was the fruit of a century-long legend, carefully nurtured and cherished by us, that Catherine and the two Alexanders had disinterestedly loved us and befriended us in our times of need. In 1892 we still clung to this cherished myth of traditional friendship despite a growing antipathy to autocracy and all it stood for in our eyes. As Secretary of State Blaine had said earlier,

The American people, always quick to answer such an appeal, do so on this occasion . . . with an appreciative sense of the opportunity afforded them not only to share their plenty with their less fortunate fellowmen in Russia, but at the same time to evince once more their good will toward the people of a nation whose relations with the United States have been marked for so many years with so many proofs of friendly regard.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, with true Russian hospitality, the officers of the *Indiana* with the committee from Philadelphia, "Messrs. Blankenburg, Drexel and Biddle," were wined and dined. To Captain R. W. Sargent, Alexander III sent an enameled goblet commemorating his mission of mercy. Receiving Minister Smith in audience, the Tsar personally expressed his gratitude. "I desire," he said to Smith, "that you will convey to the American people my sincere thanks for this manifestation of their friendly and humane sentiments."<sup>16</sup>

On April 3, the *Missouri*, bearing the contributions solicited by W. C. Edgar, some 3,000 tons of flour and cornmeal, also docked at Libau. This second ship was welcomed with the same cordiality as the *Indiana*. Shortly, three more American vessels with cargoes for the relief of the famine were likewise welcomed — the *Tynehead*,

<sup>14</sup>St. Petersburg Legation, Misc. Rec'd, March 17, 1892.

<sup>15</sup>Foreign Relations, 1892, p. 369. Despite the Secretary's official effusion, the true feelings of a considerable body of American citizens was probably reflected by the editor of the *New York Times* when he, as late as February 21, 1892, appeared to give credence to a rumor that the Tsarist government was storing grain for the Russian army instead of giving it to the starving peasants.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 377-378.

the *Connemaugh*, and the *Leo*. In addition to the foodstuffs, more than \$80,000 in cash was transmitted to Russia by mid-April.<sup>17</sup>

The total value of the American contributions was estimated at approximately \$1,000,000, or enough to feed 21,000,000 peasants for one day. Was aid in this amount really significant in relief of the famine of 1891-1892? Since the Imperial Government and the Russian landlords were estimated to have spent over \$200,000,000 in caring for 20,000,000 *mujiks* from November, 1891 until the harvest of 1892, the American donations were, in truth, scarcely more than tokens of friendship and goodwill.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, there is considerable evidence to support the claims that our gifts were not needed at all; that the Imperial Government had stripped the provinces of their food reserves in order to maintain its policy of making huge grain exports even during the lean years of 1889, 1890, and in the early autumn of 1891; that the famine was caused, not by lack of grain but by lack of transport; that Russian grain merchants resented the American donations as unwarranted competition.<sup>19</sup> These charges are pointed up by a dispatch from St. Petersburg which must have caused a wry smile in Washington. On May 16, the American Chargé reported that conditions relative to the famine seemed to be in hand, since an Imperial ukase now permitted the free exportation of maize and oats from stocks at Archangel, Reval, Riga, and Libau. It was expected that the prohibition would be removed from all grains by July 1. Further, the Chargé reported, there had been a one hundred per cent collapse in prices, which in turn had exposed large stocks of grain which had been hoarded by speculators. As to further American relief shipments, ". . . it may now be questioned whether it would be advisable to make further donations in kind . . . In fact, several newspapers in this country have plainly intimated that these gifts should cease, as they derange the market, erroneous ideas existing as to the quantity of grain sent from America."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 374-391.

<sup>18</sup>Charles E. Smith, "The Famine in Russia," *North American Review*, CLIV (May, 1892), p. 551; W. C. Edgar, "Russia's Conflict with Famine," *Review of Reviews*, V (1892), pp. 691-700.

<sup>19</sup>See W. C. Edgar, *op. cit.*, pp. 692-693; Herbert H. D. Peirce, "Russia," *Atlantic Monthly*, XC (1902), p. 469; *Railroad Gazette*, XLII ns, 1898, 458; *British Trade Report* [from Odessa], No. 1232, London, 1893, p. 4; *Foreign Relations*, 1892, p. 368.

<sup>20</sup>*Foreign Relations*, 1892, p. 384. Probably many of the "hoards" of grain were largely involuntary, due to the lack of transportation to the famine areas from the seaports, where the Government's prohibition upon exports had frozen large stocks of grain in the previous autumn.

In the meanwhile, the American committeemen had accompanied their relief shipments to the famine areas. And their impressions, as later reported to the folks back home, can scarcely have contributed to American respect for the Tsar and his people. The general picture they painted was one of unbelievable misery, degradation, filth, and corruption. W. C. Edgar described "hunger bread . . . made from weeds, chopped straw, cockle or tree bark, it is sometimes even mixed with sand, and varies in repulsiveness according to the degree of want . . . It rarely contains more than a trace of legitimate foodstuffs."<sup>21</sup> Memory of the distress which he witnessed "haunted" Rudolph Blankenburg of Philadelphia for months after his return.<sup>22</sup>

The peasants seemed utterly demoralized. A call went out from one fortunate part of Russia for agricultural workers, yet none from the famine districts responded.<sup>23</sup> This, despite free fare on the government railways.<sup>24</sup> "Why should we work?" the peasants asked. "The money has been allotted for our necessities and the officials have misappropriated it . . . The Tsar," they said, "must provide." This attitude was illustrated several years after the event by a diplomatic official, in his description of the general "unthrift" of the Russian *mujik*. In so far as possible, he wrote, the peasants of the famine area in 1892 were employed for wages in the distribution of the American supplies. At one railway station, where grain was particularly hard hit by the famine, the peasant porters heard that the food they were handling was being given free to the peasants beyond them. They protested the injustice of this preference which left them, also in a famine district, without gratuitous help. The officials in charge explained in vain. The peasants refused to work unless they received similar alms. "Thereupon grain was given them and they were asked to charitably aid their brothers by delivering the relief . . . without wage, a proposition to which they readily assented."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup>*Review of Reviews*, V, 1892, p. 698.

<sup>22</sup>Lucretia L. Blankenburg, *The Blankenburgs of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia, 1929, pp. 38-39. The merchant also charged (p. 36) that the minor Russian officials took graft even out of the relief contributions.

<sup>23</sup>*Literary Digest*, April 9, 1892, p. 622.

<sup>24</sup>Freudessreich to McCormick Harvester Company, June 13, 1892. The South was flooded with laborers, the agent reported. Quite probably, because of the lack of direct railway connections with Rostov, these had not come from the Volga area.

<sup>25</sup>Peirce to Hay, November 15, 1898, State Department Archives, Russia, Despatch 184.

These impressions of the Russians were, of course, not altogether strange to American readers. The lectures and the writings of George Kennan had introduced them to the vagaries of the Imperial Government and the miseries of its people. But no doubt these stories of the famine of 1891-1892 sharpened American condemnation of Tsarism. We sympathized with the peasants; their ignorance, unthrift, and squalor was laid at the door of the Tsar. In our minds, even more distinctly than before, he stood apart from the Russian people. Hence, when the interests of the two nation-giants finally clashed, not the Russian people but the Russian government was the enemy in 1903, in 1918, in 1950, today. And in 1921, although contemptuous of another Russian government which could not care for its own, we would rush to relieve the suffering from famine along the Volga as we had in 1892. Our giving would be greater in amount by more than sixty-fold, but not greater in good will for the Russian people.

## Book Reviews

DEUTSCHER, ISAAC. *The Prophet Armed. Trotsky: 1879-1921.* New York and London, Oxford University Press, 1954. 540 pp. \$6.00.

Isaac Deutscher, who became known to a considerable public through his biography of Stalin, is now tackling the second figure in the Soviet revolutionary triumvirate. This present volume carries Trotsky through to "defeat in victory": Kronstadt and the NEP. A second volume will complete the life of Trotsky, and will be followed, presumably, by a culminating biography of Lenin.

The pages of *The Prophet Armed* are richly larded. Mr. Deutscher has drawn heavily on two sources that have only begun to be exploited: the collection of pre-revolutionary periodicals in the Hoover Library at Stanford, and the Trotsky Archives in the Houghton Library at Harvard. Extensive quotation and paraphrase fill in many gaps that have existed in our reconstruction of 1917's fateful catastrophe.

Mr. Deutscher has cast his story of Trotsky in the Greek mould, and with sufficient justification. His Trotsky is a protagonist of the most dazzling brilliance, who rises in 1905, 1917, and in the Civil War to successive heights where he fuses with History and becomes her voice. And his Trotsky is torn by the tragic flaw — flaws rather — that decree his downfall as History turns and rends him: pride and "subjectivism" (in the Bolshevik sense), impatience, inhumanity. The second

volume will chart the downward path, and the bloody end.

On the whole, Mr. Deutscher maintains the difficult, delicate balance in judgment among Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky. Lenin, without equal, made and led the Party that led the October Revolution. But Deutscher, against the falsifications of official history, rehabilitates Trotsky's place as leader of the insurrection and organizer of the Red Army. In the years here covered, Stalin has not yet come forward full into the spotlight, but his solid, bitter, steady work is proceeding throughout the background.

Trotsky's talents were many, and Mr. Deutscher records them: the flaming oratory, which many who heard him believe to have been the greatest of our century; the linguistic facility; the witty and vibrant prose; the quickness with which Trotsky mastered every new subject; the breadth of interest, so rare among the dedicated revolutionaries. Mr. Deutscher conscientiously displays, also, Trotsky's weaknesses, not only those major flaws that I have already named but the human failings that were sometimes the obverse of his talents. Trotsky, from the standpoint of an organization and "movement," was too angular and discontinuous. He reversed his ideas too quickly, changed too abruptly his friendships and his political alignments, too abstractly pushed his ideas beyond the range of his associates. And he deluded himself with his wonderful words. Too often (as I often tried

to show in a polemic against him) Trotsky mistook the metaphors and paradoxes of his own verbal style for the objective dialectic of history.

What I have so far said about Mr. Deutscher's book might seem to suggest a very complimentary estimate, and indeed it would be foolish to dismiss his skill and his achievement. In general sum, however, I regard this present book, like his earlier biography of Stalin, as an intellectual disaster. What is wrong with Mr. Deutscher's writings on Soviet history is not this or that part or detail, but everything. It is the whole that is organically warped.

Mr. Deutscher writes from a point of view that accepts and legitimizes the Bolshevik revolution. I do not mean that he is an orthodox Communist turning out an avowedly Party document. He does not hide the blood; nor does he crown the winning faction as all saint, the losers all devil. But his words presuppose and enforce the belief that the Soviet revolution—not the Russian democratic revolution but the specifically Communist revolution—has been inevitable, progressive, and, therefore, weighed in the historical balance, right and good.

Mr. Deutscher's books are apologetics rather than history. Not all the scholarly references from all the libraries are enough to wash out the Bolshevik stain. The underlying attitude is everywhere symbolized not so much by explicit statement as by the categories employed, the choice of adjectives and the rhythm of style. The democratic revolt against the Tsar is almost too insignificant to mention. The scruples of the non- or anti-Communist leaders are invariably signs of stupidity or weakness. The horrors

of the revolution are the simple reflex of history and culture, never the consequence of wrong or evil Bolshevik actions. The pious "idealism" of the Bolsheviks is taken at face value, but not the contrary idealisms of other groups. The semantic apparatus of Communism controls Mr. Deutscher's rhetoric: orthodox "class analysis," standardized Leninist interpretation of "war," "imperialism," "colonialism," "intervention," and so on.

The sum result is a Miltonic justification of Bolshevism's way to man.

This author receives the plaudits of our critics, all the courtesies of our leading research institutions, the aid of our foundations, the pages of our magazines, publication and promotion by the great Anglo-Saxon Oxford Press. The minds of many of our university students and opinion-makers are being deeply formed, on the supremely important issues with which he deals, by his ideas. It is surely one more among the many indications of the suicidal mania of the western world.

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CRESSEY, GEORGE B. *How Strong Is Russia? A Geographic Appraisal*. Syracuse, N. Y., Syracuse University Press, 1954. 146 pp. \$3.00

HASSMANN, HEINRICH. *Oil in the Soviet Union. History, Geography, Problems*. Tr. from the German by Alfred M. Leeston. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1953. 173 pp. \$3.75.

KAZAKOV, GEORGE. *Soviet Peat Resources. A Descriptive Study*.

Studies on the U.S.S.R., No. 5. Lithoprinted for the Research Program on the U.S.S.R. by Edwards Brothers, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1953. 201 pp. \$3.75.

These three small volumes fill three quite different needs in the English language literature on the Soviet Union. Professor Cressey provides a geographic appraisal of Soviet strength for popular consumption. Dr. Hassmann presents a systematic description and analysis of a vital soviet industry in non-technical terms which will be much appreciated by every student of Soviet affairs. Professor Kazakov's book is a technical study by a former Soviet specialist of a subject on which much research has been done in the U.S.S.R., but about which little is known abroad.

*How Strong is Russia?* is Professor Cressey's second book on the U.S.S.R. His first, published in 1945, had a very similar title: *The Basis of Soviet Strength*. One pictures Professor Cressey, who is Maxwell Professor of Geography at Syracuse University, periodically testing the Soviet biceps. The results he gives to the public in a brisk, popular style. He has a gift for vivid geographic description and dramatic generalization. His new estimate is the publication in book form of three Hill Foundation lectures presented at St. Olaf's College, Northfield, Minnesota, in 1952. This new estimate is of considerably briefer compass than his earlier estimate and more popular in style with numerous anecdotes and personal experiences which doubtless gave flavor to the lectures, but which some may find inappropriate to a book with this title.

Since Cressey wrote his first esti-

mate, the Soviet Union has recovered from the losses suffered during World War II and has made rather striking gains in the material things by which a nation's power may be measured, such as coal and oil production, electric power output, and the production of iron, steel and machinery. Nevertheless, he now appears to have more doubts about Soviet power than when he wrote in his earlier book: "It is now clear that the Soviet Union has emerged as one of the great powers of the twentieth century." To be sure, early in his more recent testing of the Soviet muscle he asserts that the U.S.S.R. "is a land which has what it takes to become a great power" (p. 42). But by page 120 he has changed his mind and states quite categorically that "Russia can never become truly a great power." This latter view doubtless will surprise most readers. For if the U.S.S.R. is not already a great power, it has given a very convincing imitation of one during the last decade; certainly the rest of the world has reacted as though it were!

The value of the book as a guide to clear thinking about the Soviet Union by the general reading public is marred by other contradictions. What is the uninformed reader to think about the geographic distribution of Soviet coal when he reads on one page that "between eighty and ninety percent of all Soviet coal lies here (in Siberia)" and two pages later that "coal is widely distributed" in the U.S.S.R.? And he can hardly be blamed if he is somewhat puzzled regarding hydroelectric power when he is told that "as a whole the Union would not appear to be a major area for river-generated power" and then later on reads about the great hydro power de-

velopments built and now building on the Volga (including the largest one in the world), other large hydroelectric plants on the Ob and Irtysh in Siberia, and of plans for developing 9,000,000 kw. on the Angara river in Eastern Siberia, more than on any other river in the world. These developments also hardly bear out the author's statement in the section on non-ferrous metals, that "copper shortages restrict the plans for the expansion of hydroelectric production" (p. 40). It is confusing to read on page 41 that "the Soviet Union is more nearly self-sufficient than any other nation," that "they can get along without imports if necessary," and then on page 130 that "Trade is inescapable" and not even the U.S.S.R. "can shut itself up in a castle."

There are also a number of erroneous statements which perhaps go unnoticed in a public lecture, but become quite conspicuous on the printed page. Such as the assertion that Murmansk is the Union's "only ice-free port" (what about the Caucasian and Crimean ports?), and that the only railway to cross the frontier between the Soviet Union and China and Mongolia is the line across Manchuria, — the former Chinese Eastern Railway (what about the line from Ulan-Ude on the Trans-Siberian south to Ulan Bator, capital of Outer Mongolia?). If "inadequate aluminum places serious limitations on aircraft manufacture" (p. 40), the Pentagon has been needlessly worrying the American people with statements about the strength of the Soviet Air Force. To be sure, Soviet domestic resources of bauxite *are* inadequate and of low grade for the most part, but there is not likely to be any

cutting back of Soviet plane production so long as the U.S.S.R. dominates Hungary and can draw on its rich bauxite resources. To the historian the errors in the book's frequent historical references will be most noticeable. Thus, we are told that St. Petersburg was "Russia's first seaport," even though Archangel had been functioning for over a century before the founding of Peter's city, and Russia previously had had several small ports on the Gulf of Finland. Russian history hardly bears out the statement (p. 21) that the Voldai Hills have been "historically important as a barrier to invading armies." And if Napoleon "tried to occupy the Volga Valley and the Ural Mountains" (p. 133), it has escaped the notice of military historians.

With his flair for the dramatic the author could not resist the temptation to refer to the "Russian Bear" and its "long wanted access to warm water" (pp. 85, 127, 130), although he does not go as far as in his earlier book in which he asserted without qualification that "the history of Russia may be written in terms of its search for ocean ports." Nevertheless, it leads him to explain Russian intrigue in Afghanistan as due to this supposed urge to have access to warm water (p. 127), an explanation for which there is, of course, no support.

These defects of the book are more than offset by the clear and realistic picture it gives of the geographical limitations on Soviet power. "Man can do much, but the restrictions of great distances, remoteness from the ocean, terrain, short growing seasons, inadequate and variable rainfall, and continentality will always remain." Professor Cressey has provided a much-needed corrective

to the popular notion that the U.S.S.R. is a land of unlimited natural resources.

The book's readability is enhanced by 54 well-chosen photographs, some by the author himself, but most taken from the official Soviet photo agency, from the illustrated Soviet monthly *Soviet Union*, and from other Soviet sources. These latter necessarily give a somewhat idealized picture of the Soviet Union, but no more so than the average Chamber of Commerce gives of its city. As one would expect in a book by a geographer, there are a number of maps in the text and colored political maps in the end sheets.

One may hazard the guess that, next to uranium, more man-hours of research are spent in our intelligence agencies on the Soviet oil industry than on any other branch of the Soviet economy. As has been well said, it is no longer the infantry which is the queen of battles, but gasoline. And gasoline and the other products of petroleum are no less important to the peacetime economy of the Soviet Union. Consequently, students of Soviet affairs will welcome the publication of *Oil in the Soviet Union*, the first comprehensive survey of the Soviet oil industry to appear in English.

The author, Dr. Hassmann, is a German writer on the economic and political aspects of the petroleum industry; the present book is a translation of the German original (*Erdöl in der Sowjetunion*) which was published in 1952. It is well translated by Alfred M. Leeston, an American writer on petroleum subjects. Dr. Leeston has provided more than a mere translation, however. By numerous footnotes and a translator's appendix he has added

much new material which appeared after the publication of the German original as a result of the partial relaxation of Soviet secrecy regarding their economic developments. The book is thus more up-to-date than the usual translation.

In the author's preface Dr. Hassmann states that his work incorporates Soviet official information, and in a footnote at the beginning of the regional part of the book he mentions that his data on oil fields, refineries and pipelines is the result of a critical evaluation of Russian trade journals and newspapers as well as German, English and American publications. However, while there are numerous references to the latter, the only references to Soviet sources are to an article in *Pravda* and one in *Bolshevik* which relate, not to the oil industry, but to the consolidation of collective farms. However, between the author and his industrious translator, a great deal of information from non-Soviet publications (presumably much of it obtained originally from Soviet sources) has been sifted and gathered into a well-arranged reference book. And in any case, the numerous references to articles in non-Soviet publications will be more appreciated by most readers than references to Russian sources which are not easily available.

The book is divided into four parts and a short epilogue. The first part is an 18-page summary of the geography, history, and economic organization of the U.S.S.R. This is followed by a 40-page chapter on the development of the oil industry, with about a third devoted to the Tsarist period. Part III is a 43-page regional survey of the oil-producing districts, systematically and conveniently ar-

ranged. Part IV, "Problems of the Russian Oil Industry," deals with the nature of the demand for oil in the Soviet Union and such questions as the effect of the Soviet economic system on oil production, the adequacy of the steel supply, and the size of the oil reserves. The epilogue is a 2-page discussion of "The Soviet Union and the Middle East." The book has an author's appendix (in addition to that provided by the translator) which contains a useful table of Russian and Soviet crude oil production from 1861 to 1950 compared with world and U.S. production for the same years. It also provides a table of equivalent terms, American, English, German, and Russian, for oil products which will be much appreciated by those who have found dictionaries sometimes lacking in these technical terms. The official classification of mineral reserves adopted by the Council of Ministers in 1951 which the appendix also gives does not seem to differ in any major respect from the one in use since 1933 which Shimkin gives in his *Minerals: A Key to Soviet Power*.

The author's discussion of oil reserves would seem, however, to be inadequate for a study of this scope. He devotes only two pages to this important question, devoting most of that brief allowance to the usual *caveat* regarding Soviet figures and complaints about the inadequacy and uncertainty of the little data available. He cites three different estimates of total reserves, but does not discuss them. The figure 1 billion tons (metric) which he gives for proven reserves is that published in 1938; in the translator's appendix Dr. Leeston mentions that the Soviet technical press now gives the proven reserves as high as 4.5 billion

tons. Shimkin devotes the same amount of space to the question of reserves in his single 24-page chapter on petroleum and presents a great deal more factual material.

The inadequacy of the discussion of reserves makes especially apparent the omission of any survey of oil geology of the U.S.S.R. A brief description such as that in Eugene Stebinger's chapter on the U.S.S.R. in the American Geographical Society's *World Geography of Petroleum* would have helped greatly in giving the reader a well-rounded comprehension of the Soviet oil industry and especially of its long range prospects. Incidentally, two maps from this excellent source are published in the book under review. One is a two-page map of Europe which shows clearly the sedimentary basins where oil occurs, the oil and gas fields, pipelines, refineries and oil-handling ports. The other is a one-page map of the entire Union showing the same things on a smaller scale except for the sedimentary basins which are shown in a tiny insert map.

There are also 14 maps in the regional survey. These are taken from another recently published book, *Geography of the U.S.S.R.* by Theodore Shabad. Unfortunately they are so cluttered up with place names not mentioned by Hassmann and the choice of type is so poor that it is difficult to find the places which the author does mention. Nor are these regional maps adapted to the text in scale or coverage. Thus, it requires four of the Shabad maps to cover the important "Second Baku" oil region.

Discussion of the question of whether oil production would have increased more rapidly if it had been under private auspices, while neces-

sarily speculative, is thoughtful. The author agrees that the Soviet oil industry has not yet overcome several shortcomings, such as inadequate geological and geophysical exploration, backward testing techniques, little reworking of wells, and partially obsolete refinery techniques. But he contends that since the lack of adequate domestic private capital before the Revolution prevented the formation of private companies large enough to have realized the geological possibilities, any Russian government would have been compelled to choose between granting extensive exploration and producing concessions to the large foreign companies or undertaking the expansion of the oil industry itself. He has no doubt that the big Anglo-American-Dutch oil companies would have been able to build up in Russia (the text reads: "were able to build up"—an obvious error in translation) an oil industry appropriate to the oil potential of the country. But he argues—correctly, in the opinion of this reviewer—that Russian national pride would have opposed the development of Russia's oil resources by foreigners. Consequently, if there was to be any large expansion of production, state participation was inevitable, whether the government was opposed to private enterprise or favored it.

In the short epilogue on "The Soviet Union and the Middle East," the author, who has also published on oil production in the Middle East (*Erdöl aus dem Mittleren Osten*), sees the oil-rich lands around the Persian Gulf as the solution of Soviet oil difficulties: "All the problems of the Soviet oil industry—the supply difficulties and the oil bottlenecks—would be solved at one stroke and

eliminated forever if the Soviet Union succeeded in getting a foothold in the Middle East or became a dominating power." However, as E. DeGolyer points out in the Foreword to the book, if the Persian Gulf oilfields should come under Soviet control, they would be even more vulnerable than those of the Baku district. Furthermore, the transportation bottleneck would be enormously aggravated. The Trans-Iranian Railway has a very small number of tank cars for hauling oil the 870 miles from the Persian Gulf over two mountain ranges to the Caspian. And even if a connection with the Soviet railway system were made by completing the northwestern branch of the Trans-Iranian to Tabriz, Soviet tank cars would be unable to operate because of the difference in the railway gauge. Incidentally, the 4,000 bridges and 200 tunnels on the Trans-Iranian, make the line unusually vulnerable to interruption through air attack or sabotage. A pipeline from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian or to the Trans-Caucasus would be much longer than any the Russians have yet built and immensely more difficult to construct and operate in view of the high mountain ranges it would have to cross. It would be far cheaper to move the oil by tanker through the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, Suez Canal, Eastern Mediterranean, and Aegean to Soviet Black Sea ports. But this sea route would be even more vulnerable in the event of war than either the Trans-Iranian or a pipeline across Iran. Soviet oil concessions in northern Iran would be a different matter. Not only would the transportation problem be far simpler, but the Soviet control of the region which inevitably

would follow, would provide an additional buffer for the Baku district and the increasingly important West Turkmen fields east of the Caspian. Moscow doubtless would like to control the Persian Gulf oil fields, not as a source of oil for the Soviet Union as Hassmann contends, but because control of this rich oil region, main source of oil for Western Europe, would enormously strengthen the Soviet bargaining position in the cold war.

Professor Kazakov's *Soviet Peat Resources* is a scholarly monograph written for the specialist. It is published as No. 5 of a series, *Studies on the U.S.S.R.*, published by the Research Program on the U.S.S.R. It probably will be appreciated most by non-Russian soil scientists, especially those concerned with peat and peat formation, and also by those who are interested in the utilization of this low-grade fuel. However, the growing number of geographers specializing on the U.S.S.R. will find this little book most interesting and valuable.

It has been recognized for some time that the U.S.S.R. has about two-thirds of the world's peat bogs and that it leads the world in the utilization of peat as a fuel. Now, for the first time, those who do not read Russian are able to get a comprehensive picture of the results of much intensive study by many Russian investigators and, also, details regarding peat exploitation and utilization as worked out by Russian engineers and scientists. The scientific validity of the author's conclusions is assured by the Foreword contributed by Professor Jacob S. Joffe of Rutgers University, one of our leading soil scientists and himself familiar with Russian peat studies.

The book has six chapters. The first deals with the zonal distribution of peat bogs in the Soviet Union, estimated Soviet peat resources, and a comparison with world resources. The second and third chapters cover the Russian work in the scientific and practical classification of bogs and bog vegetation and of peat types; there is a valuable 30-page section on the composition and properties of peat. The fourth chapter describes the regional distribution of peat in the U.S.S.R. with the aid of a folding map especially prepared by the author. The fifth chapter deals with the utilization of peat, describing the methods of excavation, the industrial products (including fuel) derived from peat, and the reclamation of peat bogs for agricultural use. The concluding chapter describes the organization of surveying, mapping and research on peat and methods of investigation. The usefulness of the study is enhanced by the copious documentation and a 15-page bibliography which will facilitate further investigation by those able to use Russian.

The reviewer would have welcomed a description of the technique of using peat as fuel in steam-electric power plants and an evaluation of their operation. However, the book is such a mine of information regarding the various products obtained by peat that this omission can be overlooked.

The Research Program on the U.S.S.R. is to be congratulated on making Professor Kazakov's excellent study available. It is hoped that it will be followed by other monographs on Soviet natural resources of similar high calibre.

JOHN A. MORRISON  
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TOMASIC, DINKO. *The Impact of Russian Culture on Soviet Communism*. Glencoe, Ill., The Free Press, 1953. 287 pp. \$4.50.

Many methods have been employed in scholarly attempts to analyze the Russian national character, and now Professor Tomasic, in his latest work, introduces and demonstrates yet another. No particular label can be conveniently assigned to this new method: it appears to be an amalgam of Freudian psychology, Lasswellian political science, and cultural anthropology. Using a rich but somewhat uneven body of data from Russian history, sociology and literature, and from specialized research on Slavic social life, the author analyzes social and personality structure in the Tsarist and Soviet periods. He begins his study with a historical review of the forces that shaped Tsarist society, continues with an investigation of Russian personality development and political movements before 1917, and concludes with a brief sketch of power and personality in the U.S.S.R. Throughout the book, the focus of attention is on national character.

Professor Tomasic believes that the national character of the Russian people — more particularly of the elite — has been and is the product of two interacting influences: "that of the power-seeking and self-oriented nomadic horsemen of the Eurasian steppes, and that of the anarchic and group-oriented [Slavic] tillers of the land . . ." These influences, exerted through the family and the group, have been warring ones, creating conflict both within the individual personality and within the group. The traits most commonly associated with the

term "Russian national character," he finds, are the product of one or the other influence or of the conflict between the two. As he sees it, Russian political life is little more than the collective expression of Russian personality; and the Soviet polity, a projection of that which has gone before. This brief statement, of course, does not do justice to his complex analysis, but merely indicates its nature.

A fair judgment of the author's findings is made difficult by the uncertain and often ambivalent manner in which he presents them. One cannot always be sure whether they are offered as hard conclusions or as tentative hypotheses. Time and again, a string of conditional propositions leads to a positive statement that cannot be accepted in the light of the provisional nature of what precedes it. The following is typical: "Want of affection and self-pity experienced by a rejected child could be generalized. Identification with a humiliated and suffering mother might foster or reinforce the same tendencies . . .

Such family experiences might affect the whole life careers of some people. If these happen to be intellectual and political leaders, their emotional responses could have a significant influence on the course of the intellectual and political history of their countries. Thus, in Russia, feelings of rejection and identification with those who suffer gave a strong emotional support to ideologies which sought a Messianic salvation of all suffering humanity." (p. 109).

Another difficulty is presented by the manner in which the author uses evidence. Although, unlike many social scientists who apply their theories to Russia, Professor

Tomasic knows its history, his patent wealth of knowledge is often vitiated by a rather cavalier attitude toward time and space. Many portions of his book give the impression that all situations, conditions, and events are being presented simultaneously on one stage. To illustrate: in one instance, findings about a particular province of Russia are assumed, without further evidence, to be valid for the entire country; in another, a popular trait of the Kievian period is taken, *a priori*, to have persisted throughout the subsequent history of the nation. To be sure, the author's purpose was not to write history, but a work of this nature demands more than a token acknowledgement of its existence.

Professor Tomasic's frequent flashes of keen insight make fresh and interesting reading, and his provocative hypotheses point the way to further interesting investigation. For these qualities, his book is a definite contribution to the literature on Russia. As a scientific explanation of the Russian national character, it seems to merit the verdict of "not proven."

SIDNEY HARCAVE

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BOWMAN, HERBERT E. *Vissarion Belinsky, 1811-1848. A Study in the Origins of Social Criticism in Russia*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1954. 220 pp. \$4.25.

This able book by Dr. Bowman is the first major English study about one of the principal figures of the Russian progressive intelligentsia. It deals with Belinsky's biography only in its merest outline; it concen-

trates instead on a critical analysis of his thought in the various stages of its development. Modern Russia was born in the discussions of the 1830's and 1840's. In them Belinsky took a leading part. Like his whole generation, he produced no major work, but only essays and disquisitions, personal letters and confessions, all concerned with the problems of Russian culture and Russian society. Russia was then, culturally speaking, a very young nation and thus addicted to an astonishing degree to the solution of the riddle of the meaning of its existence. Such a situation had two consequences: on the one hand, the writers felt primarily responsible for the whole society, they were filled with a sense of mission, they put literature and art into the service of social welfare and progress; on the other hand, they became "radicals" examining the whole of society and deliberately probing its roots.

Dr. Bowman has described very well the situation of the nineteenth century Russian intelligentsia, a phenomenon entirely unknown in the West and a product of Russia's inevitable but imperfect Westernization: "Looking up to see an insensitive, arbitrary officialdom; looking down to see a vast herd of characterless subjects of the realm aimlessly at large; looking across at each other to see disagreement and disunity among a handful of potential collaborators — the members of the intelligentsia were from any point of view certain to be impressed by the hopelessness of their isolation and, as an inevitable consequence, to develop the moral and intellectual belligerence that inspired radical philosophic and political attitudes."

Belinsky was a pioneer in both ways, in the radical criticism of an

unacceptable reality and in the insistence that art was a means to an end — the enlightenment of society. Belinsky's thought during his short and unhappy life passed through several stages, and Dr. Bowman follows diligently his intellectual development. To the non-specialist reader the many translations of important passages from Belinsky's writings will be of great value. Belinsky appeared at the very beginning of Russia's literary age. The young poet, Dmitri Venevitinov, exclaimed in 1827, the year he died at the age of twenty two: "Russia has received everything from without . . . hence the complete absence of freedom and genuine achievement . . . Our position in the literary world is a completely negative one." Russian intelligentsia went into search for *narodnost* in literature and culture. Twenty years after Venevitinov's death, Belinsky could claim to be the chief interpreter of Pushkin, the chief discoverer of Lermontov and Gogol, and to have given the first critical support to the new rising stars of Turgenev, Goncharov, and Dostoevsky. Belinsky still had a feeling for the spontaneity of true art, but he became the sponsor of a critical doctrine whereby literature and culture are judged by their service to the real or imagined needs of society. In that, he expressed not only his personal conclusions but the prevailing trend of Russian thought. He became the spokesman of a theory of an interrelation between literature and society which was later carried to its logical and absurd conclusion by Pisarev and the Stalinists.

In 1837 Belinsky fell under the spell of Hegelian historicism. But he soon tried to shake off Hegelian-

ism and proclaimed the revolt of the individual. "For me now the human personality is above history, above society, above humanity," he wrote on October 4, 1840 to his friend Botkin. And, again three weeks later: "The important thing is the human personality, which must be valued as superior to all else." In a letter of March 1, 1841 he raged against the Hegelian concept of history: "All of Hegel's views on morality are downright nonsense, for in the realm of objective thought there is no morality . . . The destiny of the subject, of the individual, of the person, is more important than the destinies of the world . . . What is it to me that all will be well with my children or yours, if it is ill with me now, and if it is no fault of mine that it is so?" But Belinsky's repudiation of Hegel on behalf of the individual was superficial: the individual which Belinsky discovered was not so much the concrete individual but an incarnation of the dynamics of progressive history and of the human protest against social injustice. Equally equivocal was Belinsky's position regarding art. He insisted at the same time that art should remain art and yet should serve the cause of enlightenment. "By the very urgency of the public mission which he assigned to art, he threatened the precarious integrity of the artist. He thereby revealed his growing doubt in the capacity of art to advance the cause of human dignity to which he had so fervently dedicated himself."

However, it was not only Belinsky's doctrine which won him the devotion of the young Russian intelligentsia; his sincerity, his enthusiasm, his poverty, and his unhappiness also contributed to make

Belinsky the "father" of Russian intelligentsia. It is good that we now possess in English the first study of this man's life and work.

HANS KOHN

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LOBANOV-ROSTOVSKY, A. *Russia and Europe, 1825-1878*. Ann Arbor, Mich., George Wahr Co., 1954. 330 pp. \$5.00.

The present work is a sequel to the author's *Russia and Europe, 1789-1825*. Like its predecessor, it is largely a diplomatic history. Occasionally it digresses into accounts of military strategy and tactics.

Based on secondary sources, the book contents itself with summarizing the results of earlier research. Lobanov-Rostovsky has been able to gather a good many data not readily available elsewhere in such concise form. His painstaking accounts of diplomatic moves and countermoves provide a valuable source of factual information. Unfortunately, their usefulness is somewhat impaired by the failure of the author to consult some of the important recent publications. The discussion of Russo-German relations during the age of Bismarck, for example, is based largely on Paul Matter, *Bismarck et son temps, 1905-08*. The author seems unacquainted with Erich Eyck, *Bismarck*, 3 vols., Zurich, 1941-44. As a result, some judgments, such as that of Bismarck's attitude at the Congress of Berlin, need to be modified in the light of more recent findings. Similarly, the chapters on the Crimean War and the Congress of Paris would have benefited from a consultation of Gavin B. Henderson's essay, "The Diplomatic Revo-

lution of 1854," *American Historical Review*, XLIII, 1937-38, pp. 22 ff.

It is likewise to be regretted that Lobanov-Rostovsky has limited his narrative so strictly to diplomatic developments. The economic motivations of Pan-Slavism are ignored; yet Russian intervention in the Balkan troubles of 1876-77, and on later occasions cannot be fully understood without them. (In the discussion of earlier moves there is at least an occasional brief reference to economic factors.) The impact of Russia's revolutionary movements on her foreign policy are likewise disregarded. In consequence, the book fails to make clear the full extent of Russia's difficulty in choosing between Germany and France in her diplomatic dealings. The neglect of internal developments, except for a few brief observations, is, in fact, one of the most serious weaknesses of the book. Domestic problems did have a marked influence, if often only negatively, on Russian foreign policy by exacting at times a concentration of energies which precluded the pursuit of any active foreign policy.

There is finally a regrettable failure to provide an adequate analysis of motivations. Too often the account limits itself to a purely factual narrative, leaving the reader thoroughly confused by the shifts and changes of diplomatic maneuverings. Thus the account of Russian diplomacy during the European crisis of 1830-31 must remain unintelligible to the uninformed. The discussion of the Balkan crisis of 1877-78 is likewise difficult to follow. Austria-Hungary's attitude during the Russo-Turkish War cannot be understood properly without an examination of the question as to

whether the Treaty of San Stefano was compatible with the Russo-Austrian Agreement of January, 1877. This question, however, is not even raised by the author.

Since there is no recent non-Soviet work on nineteenth century Russian diplomacy, there is undoubtedly need for such an account. Unfortunately, *Russia and Europe, 1825-1878* cannot be said to perform this service adequately.

ANDREAS DORPALEN

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MAGARSHACK, DAVID. *Turgenev: A Life*. New York, Grove Press, 1954. 328 pp. \$6.00.

In the United States, of late, there has been a comparative paucity of new books dealing with Russia, especially with Russian literature. It is therefore gratifying to see another volume from the facile pen of an established writer such as David Magarshack.

Although most of the material in this biography is familiar to the expert in the field, the method of presentation and the introduction of hitherto unused sources make it appear more coherent and fresh. It is a valuable addition to the Yarmolinsky biography, published in 1926.

Nevertheless, readers who expect *Turgenev: A Life* to measure up to *Chekhov: A Life* (1954) will be disappointed. Magarshack evinced a more comprehensive knowledge of Chekhov than of Turgenev, either because he is more with the drama than with the novel, or because Chekhov's life was less complex.

A good portion of this book is devoted to the earliest literary productions of Turgenev, prior to the publication of *Parasha* (1843). It

is significant that Turgenev's first attempt at a novel was entitled "Two Generations." Although he abandoned the work as a failure, the theme recurs throughout Turgenev's works, until in his last novel, *Virgin Soil*, some of his characters are not merely generations, but centuries apart. For instance, Fomushka and Fimushka lived in the eighteenth century, whereas Nezhdanov and his associates lived in the future, in the twentieth century.

Although Turgenev's fame as a writer rests primarily on his seven novels, only half of this biography is devoted to the most productive and stormy period of his literary career during which these novels were written. The impression is given that, with few exceptions, Magarshack has subordinated or ignored altogether the historical background against which Turgenev's novels were written. The emphasis is upon character portrayal rather than upon current events—an approach that is familiar to and often preferred by American and English critics. It may be sufficient in the case of Chekhov, or even in the case of Turgenev's plays, but not of his novels.

Magarshack also adds fresh material and throws new light on the history of *The Memoirs of a Sportsman*, which he calls *The Diary of a Sportsman*. This title, by the way, may be applied to all Turgenev's works, for it is well known that he kept a diary for most of his characters.

This biography likewise provides us with a somewhat better appreciation of Varvara Petrovna, Turgenev's mother. She is depicted here, in spite of her tyranny and cruelty, as a woman whose actions sometimes belied her real feelings,

and as a mother who had the cause of her children at heart.

The world is familiar enough with the relations of Turgenev and Pauline Viardot. Magarshack, however, presents a whole roster of the women in Turgenev's life, tantamount to a harem. Although Turgenev's relations with some of these women are well-substantiated, in other cases they seem to be based solely on circumstantial evidence. Magarshack deals admirably with the influence for good and evil of Madam Viardot upon Turgenev from 1843 until his death in 1883—the entire span of his literary career. Some additional facets of this extraordinary woman's influence may yet be brought to light. One of this reviewer's students attributes to Madam Viardot the technical structure of the novel *Smoke*, which, according to his analysis, follows the Sonata-Allegro form, a favorite with the singer.

We are indebted to Magarshack for throwing fresh light on the relations of Turgenev with Dostoevsky, and, in particular, with Leo Tolstoy. The correspondence cited here indicates a sharp distinction between Tolstoy, the writer, and Tolstoy, the man, even as late as 1879. Of the three great literary figures, Magarshack presents Turgenev as superior in character to the others, and the greatest gentleman. He also depicts him as a good father to his natural daughter, Paulinette.

Still another contribution of this biography is the light it throws on Turgenev's relations with his Russian, French, German, and English contemporaries in the literary field, especially with Flaubert, whose *Madame Bovary* he singled out as "the most remarkable work of the new French school."

Before Magarshack wrote *Chekhov: A Life* he had already produced *Chekhov the Dramatist* (1952). Had he followed the same procedure in regard to Turgenev, with a biography following an analytical study of Turgenev as a novelist, this book, in the opinion of the reviewer, might have been more satisfying. It is to be hoped that Magarshack will proceed in reverse order to give us a companion volume on Turgenev the novelist.

IVAR SPECTOR

*University of Washington*

IVANOV, GEORGII. *Peterburgskie zimy*. New York, Chekhov Publishing House, 1952. 256 pp. \$2.00; Remizov, Alexei. *V rozovom bleske*. New York, Chekhov Publishing House, 1952. 424 pp. \$3.00; Tsvetaeva, Marina. *Proza*. New York, Chekhov Publishing House, 1953. 410 pp. \$3.00.

The reminiscences of Georgii Ivanov, a poet of undisputed lyrical talent and one of the already rare living witnesses, on this side of the Iron Curtain, of an entire span of Russian literary life, recreate for us certain aspects of the literary circles of the former capital.

St. Petersburg, Petrograd, Lenin-grad, three phases of the same city of granite and fog, majesty and misery, the poisoned spell of which none of the writers of the past were able to escape. Annensky, Blok, Gumilev, Akhmatova, Kuzmin, and Ivanov himself, were fashioned by the same magical charms as Gogol and Dostoevsky.

Georgii Ivanov offers us several portraits of his contemporaries, placing them in the setting of their everyday lives. Doubtlessly, it is a

minor account of Russian letters, but valuable, if only for a possible comparison with other memoirs. Let us note particularly the beginnings of Anna Akhmatova, the moving portrait of Ossip Mandelstam, who has not yet achieved in Russian literary criticism the place which he deserves, and Chapter XVII, which unites, while opposing them one to the other, Blok and Gumilev. It does indeed seem that over and beyond the political and philosophical differences, beyond their almost opposite conceptions of the art of poetry and even beyond the mutual hostility which lasted all their lives, the two poets had the same aims and the same passions — poetry and Russia. They both died in the same year and the same month, in August, 1921, and, as it were, for the same inner reason: they could not conceive of poetry without liberty.

Literary criticism becomes hazardous when it is a question of one of Alexei Remizov's works. Psychologically, as well as esthetically, Remizov occupies in Russian literature a place by himself, and his language, speciously popular, but in reality extremely erudite and complex — like the meanderings of his thoughts — requires serious study. In all his works as in this book, everything is autobiographical. *V rozovom bleske* has for subject matter, as do some of the other works (*Na pole Blakitnom*, for instance), the childhood, youth, life and death of his wife Seraphima Pavlovna Remizova Dovgello. Surrounding the actual facts is an accumulation of dreams, reflexes of creative invention, a host of existing and imaginary beings, from the philosophers Lev Shestov and Vasily Rozanov to "Epichka" and

"Kumaka," the usual devilish companions of Remizov's existence.

In the organized disorder, as though he wished to incorporate more fully his creation into the world of fourth dimension, Remizov moves with ease. In each one of his books can be found pages for the anthology, but, of all aspects of existence, those of misery and suffering are the closest to him, as they were for Dostoevsky. The reader will find it hard to forget certain images which the writer presents to him — that of Rozek, the dog, who is wounded unnecessarily by a brute: "The cold moonlit evening was moving outside the window, I leaned over his warm breath, then petted the hot wounded paw, and, shuddering, he looked at me, his eyes full of tears. These tears, never drying up, seethe in my eyes . . ." or of the tears of a poor creature encountered in the icy wind of a starving St. Petersburg of 1919: "I drew away from her, almost without touching the ground, afraid to scare this light away by the noise of my steps. And this light shines in my eyes. All my life I would have borne this living light and these tears of anguish. But the poison of fire [the death of Madame Remizov] has destroyed all. The dead face stares at me through the night with its eyes closed."

Special thanks should go to the Chekhov Publishing House for publishing the prose of Marina Tsvetaeva, until today scattered in various defunct magazines. Tsvetaeva is a complex poet and writer, but one of the most authentic of our times, and without doubt a writer of genius. Not only in exile, but even in twentieth-century Russia, she is an absolutely unique phenomenon. She resembles no one and succeeds

without bothering to strain for originality. It seems, indeed, that certain fragments which appeared previously in *Sovremennye Zapiski*, such as the story of "Sonichka Holliday," have been unfortunately omitted from this collection.

What we find here is seen through the eyes of Tsvetaeva which strip from her contemporaries all that is unessential. Intelligent, brilliant, scorning wit, respecting the mind, and with an innate boldness of style, Marina Tsvetaeva gives us some amazing portraits. She imparts a nobility of feeling, which men and women who write their memoirs have not accustomed us to. Her descriptions of Andrei Bely, in particular, but also of her enemy Briusov, of her friend Voloshin, reveal to us the innermost secrets of these men. Does she not maintain (pp. 183-184) that the creation of myths is the extracting of the essence of man and its projection into full light? The creation of myths, she says, is what should have been and might have been. This is exactly the contrary of Chekhov who describes that which is and that which for Marina Tsvetaeva is nonexistent.

We discover on every page of the book these myths which are the only reality of man. The words used are exact and precise, with that precision which the laziness of the average man refuses.

Memory has good taste, Marina Tsvetaeva reminds us. Never does she "settle accounts" with her literary colleagues. Behind scorned facts, she digs into the innermost recesses of human beings, in such a way that her interlocutors emerge transfigured.

Mr. Fedor Stepun, in a very fine preface, speaks of the aphorisms

which form, without Tsvetaeva meaning them to, the basis of her writing. There is, in fact, very little padding in her works; her style resembles in certain ways the spoken style of Archpriest Avvakum and has the same kind of virility.

Little known by the public, lonely until her death, Marina Tsvetaeva still awaits recognition. Fame, "this sun of the dead," as Balzac remarked, is certainly going to shed its rays on her. But one can't imagine her in an anthology of female writers. The definition which Barres erroneously applies to Marie Bashkirtseva is truly appropriate for Tsvetaeva. It is she who is "a sword hidden under a woman's dress."

ZINAIDA SHAKHOVSKOI  
Meknès, Morocco

SHUSTER, GEORGE N. *Religion Behind the Iron Curtain*. New York, Macmillan, 1954. 281 pp. \$4.00.

*Religion Behind the Iron Curtain* is a survey of the status of religion in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe. A few striking cases, such as the trials of Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary and Archbishop Stepinac in Yugoslavia, awakened considerable attention in the West and became widely known and discussed, but no systematic study of religion in the Communist satellites has been made. Therefore, this work by Dr. Shuster, President of Hunter College and former U. S. Land Commissioner for Bavaria, has particular merit.

Contrary to the inference of the book's title, however, the author excludes from his study the Soviet Union but does include Yugoslavia, which for six years has been politi-

cally independent of Soviet domination. The inclusion in Dr. Shuster's study of the West's new Marxist ally is necessitated by the fact that not merely Soviet occupation, but the materialistic, anti-religious nature of Marxist teaching itself makes peaceful co-existence of the Church and Communism impossible. As Dr. Shuster reminds the reader, Marx himself stated in his comments on the Gotha Socialist Congress of 1875 that as soon as the proletariat has taken over the state power and the means of production, it would be obliged to consolidate its gains and protect them against its enemies by suppressing all opposition. Thus, in accord with the tenets of Marxist teaching, immediately after the seizure of power in Russia and in the satellite countries, there followed the suppression of liberty for the achievement of Marxist spiritual domination. This resulted not only in the limitation of the churches' activities but in an overt struggle against them.

Since the years of the Marxists' debut in the *Kulturkampf* within Russia, their methods have considerably changed. In the early period of the Soviet regime the main weapon in the fight against religion — Marxism's greatest ideological adversary, proclaimed by Marx himself as the "opiate of the people" — was primarily the actual strength of the administration and of the Party. The Marxist rulers later developed more effective tools for their ideological fight, such as anti-religious propaganda, isolation of the youth from the influence of the churches, and, finally, infiltration of the churches themselves.

The church leaders have had ample opportunity to observe the versatility and effectiveness of the

techniques applied by the Communists since they have become the masters of Eastern Europe. It is necessary to state, however, that the success of the Communists' war against religion has been greatly dependent on the individual nation's resistance and spiritual condition. It is significant that in Czechoslovakia, the last country to become a Soviet satellite, the progress of anti-religious activity has been very successful. This, Dr. Shuster explains by the fact that nowhere in Europe was the number of officially recognized agnostics so high as in that country, and that already after World War I the Catholic Church was strongly shaken by the more political than religious secession from it of the "national" Czechoslovak church, which as early as 1920-1925 had attempted to unite the progressive and patriotic factions within the Catholic Church. This progressive but patriotic formation within the Church became the strongest weapon of Communism after World War II. In Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Poland the Communists were able to find among the Catholics and Protestants not numerous but nevertheless active and resourceful groups which assisted in dynamiting the organized religious bodies. Under the pressure of these "patriots" even Catholic bishops were obliged to proclaim that while preserving their canonical fidelity to the Vatican, they nevertheless repudiated all interference by the Holy See in secular matters and organizational problems of the Church. Among the Protestants a similar trend could be observed in Hungary, where the followers of the Swiss Calvinist theologian, Professor Karl Barth, elaborated a theory accord-

ing to which a Christian "ought to refrain from committing himself to either side in the debate between East and West," both of which are materialistic. At the same time Professor Barth suggested that Calvinists should "not lose their sense of humor," and while caring for the salvation of their souls, not repudiate cooperation with the state, even when this state is militantly anti-religious.

Dr. Shuster gives a detailed and precise account of the present situation of religion in the satellite countries. In his historical discourses, however, he committed a few errors which could easily have been avoided. The Russian Church, for instance, became independent from Rome in 1448, under Vasily III, not in 1547. Ivan IV did not need to proclaim independence from Rome, because before his reign no spiritual exchange had existed between Moscow and the Western Church. Also, Patriarch Nikon never attempted to appeal to the Pope for unity. Dr. Shuster could also be reproached for his almost exclusive concentration on the situation of the Roman Catholic Church behind the Iron Curtain. He demonstrates little interest in the situation of the Protestant Church in Czechoslovakia, where the Protestant tradition has been strong since the time of Huss in the Middle Ages, as well as in the Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia, where the Greek-Orthodox confession continues to be the confession of the majority of the population. Also, little is said about the condition of Moslems in the Balkans.

Professor Shuster's book discloses to American readers the acuteness of the problems of relations between

Marxism and religion. The picture is a somber one because in these lands religion not only has been driven into a defensive position, but has lost much ground. However, the resistance of Catholicism in Poland, the success of the Protestant *Krichentags* in Germany, and the staunch opposition of all confessions to persecution indicates that complete Communist victory has still to be attained. Complaints in the Soviet press about the activity of the Church in Russia and the recent tactical retreat of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from its violently anti-religious stand, announced last fall by Khrushchev, though contradictory, are significant for they show that the strength of the Church cannot easily be overcome by the combined impact of materialism and Marxism.

SERGE A. ZENKOVSKY  
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LESEN, GEORGE ALEXANDER. *Report from Hokkaido: The Remains of Russian Culture in Northern Japan*. Hakodate, The Municipal Library of Hakodate, 1954. 216 pp. \$3.50.

In a nutshell — the pages are small, illustrations numerous, and type large — Professor Lensen of Florida State University gives the much-needed framework of Russo-Japanese cultural interchange in Japan's northern island from the end of the seventeenth century to the present. Written and published in Japan to coincide with the centenary celebration of the opening of the port of Hakodate, this little survey introduces American readers to an almost unknown world — a needed corrective to the notion that American influence on Japan ac-

counts for the Westernization of that country.

The story is an account of individuals, both Japanese and Russian. It is concise to the point of terseness; doubtless the author was painfully aware of limited space, but he made excellent use of what he had. Professor Lensen leaves diplomatic history to other writers; he is concerned with specific friendships, individual hostages, Russians who studied the Japanese language and Japanese who studied Russian, the first ventures on either side at living in the other country, the early dictionaries and descriptive books, the introduction of Russian clothing, stoves, architecture and literature to Japan, the first photography in Hokkaido, the amazing career and success of the Greek Orthodox missionary Nikolai, the schools of Russian language that sprang up in Hokkaido. Anthropologists will find a documented story of cultural diffusion, and will join with historians in appraising the network of personal friendships and ready sympathy between Russians and Japanese.

A compact concluding chapter carries implications for present-day American dealings with Japan: "There is relatively little admiration or support of Communism in Japan, but there is much sympathy for the Russian people." Like other Asiatics, the Japanese "tend to judge nations by culture rather than governmental structure . . . the maturity of a nation's literature and music and even its sportsmanship." One conclusion Americans should heed: "Perhaps the one thing we

prize most after liberty and consider the clinching argument in any debate is our standard of living. Yet . . . it is so very much above the reach and dreams of most, particularly in Asia, that it sometimes actually alienates rather than impresses . . ." Watching that kind of alienation has left this reviewer sick at heart over the display of American wealth before Asiatics who might have thrilled to our dreams of democracy had they been presented in terms that were practical for poverty-ridden folk.

"Japanese sympathy for the Russian people may or may not ever be translated into political action . . . the existence of such sympathy should be kept in mind by those strategists who build castles in the air on the assumption of 'historical' Russo-Japanese enmity. Any propaganda line geared to proving to the Japanese that the Russian people *per se* are bad, barbaric, or inferior is most likely to boomerang against its exponents."

Unfortunately this book is not readily accessible on the American market. Its author must have labored over proofreading, and he won his struggle; his Japanese printers turned out a good job with only one noted misspelling. For scholarly readers, there are ideographs to shed light on the many Japanese names. Together with a good bibliography of sources, this study will facilitate further researches in the field that Professor Lensen has opened.

DOUGLAS G. HARING  
Syracuse University

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**Boris Zaitzeff—CHEKHOV, A LITERARY BIOGRAPHY**      260 pp.      \$2.50

Beginning with the little-known origins of Chekhov's family, Zaitzeff takes the reader over the writer's entire career, ending with a description of his death in Germany. This new biography is written with warm sympathy and gives a vivid picture of Chekhov, the man and the writer.

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